

**THE CURRENT SITUATION IN GEORGIA AND
IMPLICATIONS FOR U.S. POLICY**

HEARING
BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
UNITED STATES SENATE
ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS
SECOND SESSION
—
SEPTEMBER 9, 2008
—

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THE CURRENT SITUATION IN GEORGIA AND IMPLICATIONS FOR U.S. POLICY

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2008

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:32 a.m. in room SD-106, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Senator Carl Levin (chairman) presiding.

Committee members present: Senators Levin, Lieberman, Bill Nelson, E. Benjamin Nelson, Bayh, Clinton, Pryor, Webb, Warner, Collins, Thune, and Martinez.

Committee staff members present: Richard D. DeBobes, staff director; and Leah C. Brewer, nominations and hearings clerk.

Majority staff members present: Madelyn R. Creedon, counsel; Richard W. Fieldhouse, professional staff member; Peter K. Levine, general counsel; William G.P. Monahan, counsel; and William K. Sutey, professional staff member.

Minority staff members present: Michael V. Kostiw, Republican staff director; William M. Caniano, professional staff member; and David A. Morris, minority counsel.

Staff assistants present: Brian F. Sebold and Breon N. Wells.

Committee members' assistants present: Christopher Caple and Greta Lundeberg, assistants to Senator Bill Nelson; Andrew R. Vanlandingham, assistant to Senator Ben Nelson; Jon Davey, assistant to Senator Bayh; M. Bradford Foley, assistant to Senator Pryor; Gordon Peterson, assistant to Senator Webb; Sandra Luff and Samuel Zega, assistants to Senator Warner; Jason Van Beek, assistant to Senator Thune; and David Brown and Brian W. Walsh, assistants to Senator Martinez.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR CARL LEVIN, CHAIRMAN

Chairman LEVIN. Good morning, everybody. Today the committee meets to receive testimony on the situation in Georgia. Our witnesses are Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, Eric Edelman; Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs, Daniel Fried; Lieutenant General John Paxton, Jr., Director of Operations, J-3, Joint Staff; and Brigadier General Michael Flynn, Director for Intelligence, J-2, Joint Staff.

We hope our witnesses will provide some of the backdrop for the current disputes over South Ossetia and Abkhazia, which date back to the early 1990s following the breakup of the Soviet Union and are rooted in ethnic differences going back hundreds of years. We also need to understand the immediate causes in the months

leading up to the outbreak of hostilities in early August, what led to the Georgian government's decision to attempt to assert military control over South Ossetia, given its strong ties to Russia, and what led Russia to respond with a disproportionate military offensive extending beyond South Ossetia.

A related question is what did the United States and others do, or fail to do in the run-up to the conflict to try to prevent it. Did Georgian President Saakashvili believe that the United States would support his use of military force and, if so, was there any basis for his belief? Did the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) promise of future admission for Georgia and Ukraine play a role in the Georgian decision? Did the United States do all it could to encourage Georgia to work within the existing peace settlement framework under the auspices of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and discourage the use of force by the Georgians?

I'm encouraged by the immediate response by the U.S. and our international partners, which presented a united front and sent clear signals to the parties involved. This morning it is reported that Russian President Medvedev and the European Union (EU) have agreed on a schedule for the pullback of Russian forces and the deployment of a 200-person EU observer force in the region. Under the agreement, Russian forces will begin to withdraw forces from undisputed parts of western Georgia in the next week, EU observers will be in place no later than October 1, and Russia has agreed to withdraw from all positions in undisputed areas by no later than October 11.

We need to look at the implication of all these events for our longer-term relationship with Georgia, Russia, and others in the region. We need to review all our options, including options that the Department of State (DOS) and Department of Defense (DOD) are looking at. This hearing begins Congress' review of the Georgia crisis and understanding its implication for Georgia's security, for the region, and globally.

I hope our witnesses today can help us sort through these implications, and these include: What are the implications of Russia's military assertiveness for the United States' strategic relationship with Russia? What is the right balance to strike between signaling to Russia that its claims of a sphere of influence which override the sovereignty of its neighbors are unacceptable, while keeping the door open to Russian integration into the broader international community and working with Russia in areas where our strategic interests are aligned, such as preventing a nuclear Iran or counter-terrorism efforts?

How should the United States proceed in building relationships with Georgia and others in the region, including military ties? What does the crisis in Georgia mean for NATO's future, both in terms of reassuring NATO members like Poland and the Baltic States and for the applications of Georgia and Ukraine for Membership Action Plans (MAPs), the first step to be considered for full NATO membership? Finally, what are the implications for the control of oil and natural gas pipelines from Central Asia for the U.S. and Europe's energy security?

We hope to gather from this hearing our witnesses' thoughts on how to step back from deeper confrontation while preserving principles of sovereignty and other important principles of international law. We're going to begin the hearing in open session, and at the conclusion of the open session we will reconvene in a closed session. The balance of my statement will be inserted in the record in full. [The prepared statement of Senator Levin follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY SENATOR CARL LEVIN

Welcome to our witnesses.

Today the committee meets to receive testimony on the situation in Georgia.

Our witnesses are:

- Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Eric Edelman;
- Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs Daniel Fried;
- Lieutenant General John Paxton, Jr., Director for Operations, J-3, Joint Staff; and
- Brigadier General Michael Flynn, Director for Intelligence, J-2, Joint Staff.

I hope our witnesses can provide some of the backdrop for the current disputes over South Ossetia and Abkhazia, which date back to the early 1990s following the break up of the Soviet Union, and are rooted in ethnic differences going back hundreds of years. We also need to understand the immediate causes in the months leading up to the outbreak of hostilities in early August. What led to the Georgian Government's decision to attempt to assert control militarily over South Ossetia, with its strong ties to Russia? And what led Russia to respond with a disproportionate military offensive extending beyond South Ossetia?

A related question is what did the United States and others do, or fail to do, in the run-up to the conflict to try to prevent it? Did Georgian President Saakashvili believe that the United States would support his use of military force, and if so, was there any basis for his belief? Did the NATO promise of future admission to Georgia and Ukraine play a role in the Georgian decision? Did the United States do all it could to encourage Georgia to work within the existing peace settlement framework under the auspices of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and discourage the use of force by the Georgians?

I was encouraged that the immediate response by the United States and our international partners, presenting a united front and sending clear signals to the parties involved. This morning it is reported that Russian President Medvedev and the European Union have agreed on a schedule for the pullback of Russian forces and the deployment of a 200-person European Union observer force in the region. Under the agreement, Russian forces will begin to withdraw forces from undisputed parts of western Georgia in the next week. European Union observers will be in place no later than October 1, and Russia has agreed to withdraw from all positions in undisputed areas by no later than October 11.

The immediate international response to the crisis has also included:

- Demanding full compliance with the European Union-brokered six-point ceasefire agreement signed by the Russian and Georgian Presidents. This includes renouncing the use of force; ceasing all hostilities; withdrawing forces to pre-conflict positions, while allowing for certain additional security measures; providing free access for humanitarian aid; and convening international talks on the future status of Ossetia and Abkhazia.
- NATO Foreign Ministers have signaled to Russia, in their August 19 statement on the situation in Georgia, that with regard to the NATO-Russia relationship, "we cannot continue with business as usual." The NATO Foreign Ministers called Russia's military response "disproportionate," "inconsistent" with Russia's peacekeeping role, and "incompatible" with the principles on which the NATO-Russia relationship has been based, including the Helsinki Final Act, the NATO-Russia Founding Act, and the Rome Declaration.
- The United States and the international community have also taken steps to provide some reassurance to Georgia and our other allies in the region in the face of Russia's overreaching military action. NATO Foreign Ministers expressed their support for a resolution in Georgia based on "the principles of Georgia's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity

recognized by international law and U.N. Security Council resolutions.” NATO has established the NATO-Georgia Commission, similar to the existing NATO-Ukraine Commission, to provide a forum for addressing cooperative initiatives with Georgia.

- The provision of international humanitarian aid for Georgia—including the delivery of over 2 million pounds of humanitarian assistance under Operation Assured Delivery—signals to Georgia that we stand ready to assist in its recovery from the conflict. I commend our soldiers, sailors, and airmen in the U.S. European Command for their efforts in this regard.
- The international community has supported the need for international monitoring of the zone of dispute. The OSCE has agreed to increase its international monitors in Georgia to 100. The European Union is also discussing an international monitoring force.

Russia finds itself totally isolated because of its decision to recognize the independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. At the recent meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, even China and four Central Asian states declined to support Russia’s actions in the Caucasus, instead urging a peaceful resolution of Russia’s and Georgia’s differences and reaffirming their commitment to the principle of “territorial integrity.”

We need to look at the implications of these events for our longer-term relationship with Georgia, Russia and others in the region. We need to review all our options, including options the Department of Defense and the Department of State are looking at. This hearing begins Congress’ review of the Georgia crisis and understanding its implications for Georgia security, for the region, and globally.

I hope our witnesses today can help us sort through those implications. These include:

- What are the implications of Russia’s military assertiveness for the United States’ strategic relationship with Russia? What is the right balance to strike between signaling to Russia that its claims of a sphere of influence, which override the sovereignty of its neighbors, are unacceptable while keeping the door open to Russian integration into the broader international community and working with Russia in areas where our strategic interests are aligned, such as preventing a nuclear Iran or counterterrorism efforts?
- How should the United States proceed in building relationships with Georgia and others in the region, including military ties?
- What does the crisis in Georgia mean for NATO’s future, both in terms of reassuring NATO members like Poland and the Baltic states, and for the applications of Georgia and Ukraine for Membership Action Plans, the first step to be considered for full NATO membership?
- Finally, what are the implications for the control of oil and natural gas pipelines from Central Asia for U.S. and Europe’s energy security?

We hope to gather from this hearing our witnesses’ thoughts on how to step back from deeper confrontation while preserving principles of sovereignty and other important principles of international law.

We will begin the hearing in open session and at the conclusion of the open session we will reconvene in closed session in SVC-217.

Chairman LEVIN. Senator Martinez, did you want to give an opening statement?

Senator MARTINEZ. No, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I will hear from the witnesses and have questions later.

Chairman LEVIN. Very good.

Secretary Edelman. We welcome all of our witnesses. Thank you for being here.

STATEMENT OF HON. ERIC S. EDELMAN, UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR POLICY, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Mr. EDELMAN. Chairman Levin, Senator Warner, and members of the committee, thank you for giving me the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss the Georgia-Russia conflict and the implications for security in the region. I’m particularly pleased

to be here with my DOS colleague, Ambassador Fried, with whom I've worked on these issues for many years.

With your indulgence, I have a longer written statement for the record that I'd like to submit and I'll try and keep my opening remarks brief, but I hope fairly comprehensive.

We're here today to discuss a conflict that many of us had hoped would be avoided. Regrettably, however, despite intensive diplomatic efforts on the part of the administration to reduce tensions in the region, serious conflict did ultimately break out between Russia and Georgia, leading to a significantly disproportionate response by Russia, its military invasion of a sovereign country, and its efforts to undermine the democratically-elected leadership of one of its neighbors.

All of these developments are deeply troubling, having called into question Russia's reliability as a partner, and pose serious challenges for Russia's neighbors, the United States, and our European allies. In response to the crisis, U.S. policy is to support Georgia's people, sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity, support our allies in the region who feel threatened by Russian aggression, and demonstrate to Russia that its aggressive actions do not serve its national interest, will not be tolerated, and will not be cost-free.

Let me begin by making it clear that the United States does not seek a new Cold War. As Secretary Gates has said on a number of occasions, one was enough. We have never seen our activities in the region as a 19th century contest with Russia for influence, nor do we believe that the Eurasian space should be subject to any external sphere of influence.

In light of recent developments, we are now at a crossroads. Russia must decide how it wants to define its future relationship with the international community. Russia's recent actions have already diminished its standing in the world and have led to its growing isolation. The international community has resolutely rejected Russian aggression. Russia's future actions will define how it is viewed in the world and how the world moves forward with Russia. We hope that, on sober reflection, Russia will choose a different path, but our policy will respond appropriately to Russian actions.

We'll continue to work with our western allies and our international partners to resolve the current crisis. U.S. cooperation with Europe has been the bedrock of the Euro-Atlantic security structure for decades and we will pursue opportunities coming out of the current crisis to build a stronger and more capable Euro-Atlantic alliance to meet the range of 21st century challenges.

South Ossetian and Georgian forces exchanged fire repeatedly in early August. We believe the Georgians conducted a military operation with what they may have believed were limited political aims of restoring Georgian sovereignty over South Ossetia, to eliminate the harassing fire from South Ossetian separatists on Georgian civilians. The use of artillery fire and multiple rocket launches into urban areas and into the proximity of Russian peacekeepers was lamentable and we do not condone that activity.

But Russia used Georgia's ground operation as a pretext for its own offensive. Sweeping Georgian forces out of Tskhinvali, Russia quickly carried the operation into undisputed Georgian territory. Russia's two-pronged assault resulted in the retaking of all of

South Ossetia and the Georgian-controlled Upper Kodori Gorge in the Abkhazia region.

Within hours of Georgia's move into South Ossetia, thousands of hardened Russian combat troops and hundreds of tanks, vehicles, and dozens of planes were flooding into South Ossetia and conducting air and missile strikes into Georgian areas controlled by Tbilisi. It's clear that Russia's political and military leadership executed a preplanned operation to forcibly and quickly change the status quo in Georgia.

Prime Minister Putin has tried to lay blame on the United States for "arming Georgians to the teeth." The reality is something quite different. In 2002, in response to Russian accusations that Georgia was harboring Chechen rebels in the lawless mountainous border region of the Pankisi Gorge, the U.S. initiated the Georgia Train and Equip Program (GTEP). The follow-on program, the Georgian Sustainment and Stability Operations Program (SSOP), trained and equipped Georgian forces for peace support operations in Iraq. Three Georgian brigades were trained through the GTEP and the two SSOPs.

Since the training, Georgia has been the highest per capita contributor of troops in the war on terror. To date, 7,800 Georgian soldiers have deployed to Iraq since the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom, serving alongside U.S. forces. Over 50 served in Afghanistan during the elections in 2004 in that country. Four Georgian soldiers have paid the ultimate price and 19 more have been wounded while serving in combat alongside U.S. and coalition forces in Iraq. Georgia is among our staunchest allies in the war on terror.

While our defense and military relations with Georgia grew, to ensure transparency we provided regular briefings on GTEP and the SSOP activities to the Russians. Unfortunately, it appears that the Russians have been unable to move beyond their Cold War zero sum thinking, as the actions of Russian military units to systematically eviscerate Georgian armed forces appear in part to be a revenge action for these capacity-building efforts by the United States.

DOD was deeply involved prior to and during the onset of conflict in an effort to convince leaders on both sides to de-escalate and refrain from resolving their differences by military force. The Secretary of Defense spoke with President Saakashvili on numerous occasions, including in November 2007 and again in March 2008 during bilateral consultations in Washington. Secretary Gates continued to speak with his Georgian and Russian counterparts during the crisis, urging restraint and stressing that all forces must move back to pre-August 6 positions.

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff also spoke with his Georgian and Russian counterparts during this crisis. The consistent message was one of strategic patience and to find a peaceful resolution to the frozen conflicts, as Russia was clearly adding to the tension in order to provoke a Georgian response.

Russia's actions have caused a reassessment, not just of U.S. policies towards Russia, but of the EU's, of NATO's, and beyond. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), of which Russia is a member, refused to endorse Russia's unilateral recognition of

South Ossetian and Abkhazian independence. In fact, it issued a statement reaffirming the principle of territorial integrity of states.

The EU, under the leadership of the French presidency, met in an extraordinary session to criticize Russia's disproportionate military response, condemn Russia's recognition of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, and postpone meetings of the EU-Russia partnership agreement. The G-8 is issuing G-7 statements to let a fellow member know that Russia's actions are not condoned by the larger group.

Georgia's NATO ambitions rest on fundamental shared values and a promise that NATO would keep its doors open to all aspirants ready to shoulder the responsibilities of membership. NATO has decided to further NATO-Georgian relations by establishing a NATO Georgia Commission.

What are we doing today? First, we must support Georgia. We seek to stabilize the situation on the ground, help the country recover and thrive economically, preserve Georgia's sovereignty, maintain our support for its territorial integrity, and assist in rebuilding its military. After the outbreak of hostilities, our primary concern is to stop the shooting and to help the people of Georgia. Our humanitarian efforts by air, land, and sea have mitigated the human suffering and exhibited U.S. steadfast support for the Georgian people in their time of need.

As we continue with our humanitarian relief, our primary effort now is to support Georgia and its democratically-elected government. Last week, the U.S. rolled out a \$1 billion program in additional economic assistance to Georgia, which will help it weather the immediate needs caused by the current crisis. As we move forward, we look forward to working with the Congress on assistance packages that best frame the U.S. commitment to Georgia and regional partners at this critical time.

Through September 8, 62 sorties have delivered more than 1,145 short tons of humanitarian aid. The U.S.S. *McFaul*, the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter *Dallas*, and the U.S.S. *Mount Whitney* have delivered humanitarian supplies through the Georgian ports of Batumi and Poti.

Georgia, like any sovereign country, should have the ability to defend itself and deter renewed aggression. DOD is sending an assessment team to Tbilisi later this week to help us begin to consider carefully Georgia's legitimate needs and our response. After assessment of these needs, we'll review how the United States will be able to support the reconstruction of Georgia's economy, infrastructure, and armed forces.

For several years, the United States has played a significant role in preparing Georgian forces to conduct counterterrorism missions, first as part of an effort to help Georgia rid its Pankisi Gorge of Chechen and other extremists, and then as part of multinational coalition efforts. It's worth noting that on the night of August 7, Georgia's best-trained military forces, which represented 20 percent of its Active-Duty Forces, were on duty in Iraq in support of the multinational coalition effort there. Georgia in fact fielded the third largest national contingent to the coalition, behind only the United States and the United Kingdom.

We recognize, of course, that because of the events of the past month Georgia's own national security concerns may now mean it may be less able to contribute to such coalition efforts in the future. We'll be looking carefully and responsibly at Georgia's needs over the coming weeks and months.

U.S. efforts to help Georgia will not be undertaken by us alone. NATO's North Atlantic Council decided on August 19th to develop a NATO Georgia Commission aimed at supporting Georgia's relations with NATO. NATO has also decided to assist Georgia in assessing the damage caused by Russian military action, including to the Georgian armed forces, and to help restore critical services necessary for normal public life and economic activity.

NATO has already sent an advisory support team to Georgia, as well as its Special Representative for the Caucasus and Central Asia, and the North Atlantic Council Permanent Representatives plan to visit Georgia in the near future.

The U.S. is also committed to support for our other friends and neighbors in the region, especially Ukraine, Poland, and the Baltic States, who have been threatened by Moscow. These countries must know that the United States is with them and, just as importantly, Russia must know the same.

As we continue to support Georgia and our allies, we must review our relations with Russia. We will not continue with business as usual. We've suspended our bilateral military interaction with Russia and are in the process of a comprehensive review of all activities.

The United States over the course of three administrations has sought to secure and sustain the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of the new independent states of Eurasia. Concurrently, we worked to assist Russia in its integration into the global economic community, as well as to facilitate Russian cooperation with NATO in the new post-Cold War Europe. Our policies contributed to a Europe more united and integrated through either membership or close association with the EU and NATO.

We must not and will not allow Russia's aggression to succeed in Georgia, nor must we miss an opportunity to link arms in solidarity with our partners and friends in the region in the face of aggression. The U.S. has a responsibility to support Georgia and we'll be doing just that in the weeks and months ahead, and we must show Russia through our words, our policies, and our actions that it serves Russia's best interests, as well as those of the west, for Russia to take steps to end its isolation and work toward a constructive framework of relations with the U.S. and Europe.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for your time and I thank all the members for their patience, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Edelman follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY HON. ERIC S. EDELMAN

Chairman Levin, Ranking Member McCain, members of this committee, thank you for giving me the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss the Georgia-Russia conflict and its implications for security in the region.

We are here today to discuss a conflict that many of us hoped would be avoided. Regrettably, however, despite intensive, longstanding diplomatic efforts on the part of the administration to reduce tensions in the region, serious conflict did ultimately break out between Russia and Georgia the evening of August 7, leading to a significantly disproportionate response by Russia, its military invasion of a sovereign

country, and its effort to undermine the democratically-elected leadership of one of its neighbors. Russia's subsequent decision to recognize South Ossetia and Abkhazia as independent states was an additional misguided step aimed at challenging the territorial integrity of Georgia.

All of these developments are deeply troubling, have called into question Russia's reliability as a partner, and pose serious challenges for Russia's neighbors, the United States and our European Allies.

In response to the current crisis, U.S. policy is to: (1) Support Georgia's people, sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity; (2) Support our Allies in the region, who feel threatened by Russian aggression; and (3) Demonstrate to Russia that its aggressive actions do not serve its national interest, will not be tolerated, and will not be cost free.

I will seek today to outline some of the many challenges we face, describe how the current crisis developed, what we did to try to prevent it, and how we ought to proceed in responding to and reassessing our relationship with Russia.

Let me begin by making it clear: the United States, despite Russia's recent actions, does not seek a new Cold War. As Secretary Gates has said on a number of occasions, one was enough. We have never seen our activities in the region as a 19th century contest with Russia for "influence." Nor do we believe the Eurasian space should be subject to any external sphere of influence. All countries—the countries of the South Caucasus, Russia, and the transatlantic community—would benefit from a set of benign relations among all the players, great and small.

We have spent 18 years working with the countries of the region, with Russia, and with our western European allies to promote mutual cooperation in the region. Three U.S. administrations throughout this period have also worked hard to support Russia's stated goal of integration into major western institutions.

We are now at a crossroads. In light of recent developments, Russia must now decide how it wants to define its future relationship with the international community.

Russia's recent actions have already diminished its standing in the world and have led to its growing isolation. The international community has resolutely rejected Russian aggression. Russia's future actions, including those it takes in the coming weeks and months in Georgia, will continue to define how it is viewed in the world and how the world defines and moves forward with Russia. We hope that on sober reflection Russia will choose a different path, but our policy will respond appropriately to Russian actions.

We will continue to work with our western allies and international partners to seek solutions for resolving the current crisis. U.S. resolve and cooperation with Europe has been a bedrock of the Euro-Atlantic security structure for decades. We are also consulting with our European friends as we consider options for responding to Russia's actions and begin the process of reassessing our relations with Russia.

We will pursue opportunities stemming out of the current crisis to build a stronger and more capable Euro-Atlantic alliance able to meet the range of 21st century challenges.

Our relationship with Russia has been an important focus for this administration and we have consistently sought to work with Russia on a wide range of areas of mutual interest. President Bush's commitment to a partnership with Russia has been based on a realistic assessment of these common interests, evidenced earlier this year by the Strategic Framework Declaration agreed to in Sochi, which was envisioned to be the basis for long-term cooperation on a wide range of strategic interests.

While U.S. strategic interests dictate that we should keep the door open to the possibility of future cooperation with Russia along the lines we hoped for at Sochi, we should also remain open to the possibility that Russian intentions may not be what we understood them to be and that Russia may not, in the near-term at least, step back from its current course. This will demand patience and an ongoing commitment to stand firm in defense of our interests and those of our friends and Allies in the region.

WAR BREAKS OUT

August was a volatile month in South Ossetia. After tit-for-tat attacks in South Ossetia in late July and early August, including roadside bomb detonations against South Ossetian authorities and an assassination attempt against the leader of the Georgian-backed provisional government in South Ossetia on July 3, South Ossetian and Georgian forces exchanged fire repeatedly during the week of August 4.

This shelling increased substantially on August 5–6, as South Ossetian separatist forces trained their artillery on Georgian villages to the south and north of the sepa-

ratist capital. A Georgian peacekeeping armored personnel carrier was destroyed on August 7.

With fire constant from the South Ossetian side, Georgia sent its Reintegration Minister to South Ossetia for talks and President Saakashvili announced a unilateral cease-fire on August 7. Despite the cease-fire, Georgia asserted that the South Ossetians continued shelling Georgian peacekeepers and villages, even from behind positions occupied by Russian peacekeepers. Despite their mandate, Russian 'peacekeepers' did not fulfill their duty to stop the exchange of shelling between both sides.

That night, the Georgians announced that they were compelled to protect their citizens and began to suppress South Ossetian firing positions with ground operations. Georgia expanded operations, shelling the city of Tskhinvali. A Georgian ground operation quickly captured separatist controlled villages and much of the city of Tskhinvali.

The Georgian leadership's decision to employ force in the conflict zone was unwise. Although much is still unclear, it appears the Georgians conducted what they thought was a limited military operation with the political aim of restoring Georgian sovereignty over South Ossetia to eliminate the harassing fire from the South Ossetian separatists on Georgian civilians. This operation was hastily planned and implemented.

The use of artillery fire and multiple launched rockets into urban areas and into the proximity of Russian peacekeepers is lamentable, and we do not condone this activity.

Russia used Georgia's ground operation as the pretext for its own offensive. Sweeping Georgian forces out of Tskhinvali, Russia quickly carried the operation into undisputed Georgian territory. Russia's two-pronged assault, deploying forces not only through South Ossetia, but also into Abkhazia by land, as well as by sea and air, resulted in the retaking of all of South Ossetia, and the Georgian controlled Upper Kodori Gorge in the Abkhazia region. This combined arms military operation used Russian conventional, airborne, and special forces based in the North Caucasus Military District, as well as Airborne troops from Pskov and Ivanovo; naval forces from the Black Sea Fleet; irregular forces—South Ossetians, Cossacks and Chechens; and special forces.

Within hours of Georgia's moves into South Ossetia, thousands of hardened Russian combat troops and hundreds of tanks, vehicles and dozens of planes were flooding into South Ossetia and conducting air and missile strikes into Georgian areas controlled by Tbilisi. Within days, Russian troops moved without hesitation into undisputed Georgian territory.

From the beginning of the conflict, Russian defense officials told senior Department of Defense officials that Russia's aims were limited to protecting its citizens and peacekeepers and removal of Georgian forces from their post-August 6 positions. What became clear is there never seemed to be a limit to Russia's operational—nor strategic—aims. It is clear that Russia's political and military leadership executed a pre-planned operation to forcibly and quickly change the status quo in Georgia.

HISTORY OF U.S. MILITARY ASSISTANCE

Prime Minister Putin has tried to lay blame on the U.S. for "arming the Georgians to the teeth", but the Georgian armed forces were never trained and or equipped by the U.S. to fight the Russians. Georgia has been a partner in the global war on terrorism since September 2001. In 2002, in response to Russian accusations that Georgia was harboring Chechen rebels in the lawless, mountainous border region of the Pankisi Gorge, the U.S. initiated the Georgia Train and Equip Program (GTEP), which sought to provide Georgia's security services with assistance in securing internal threats. This program implemented President Bush's decision to respond to the Government of Georgia's request for assistance to enhance its counterterrorism capabilities and address the situation in the Pankisi Gorge. This program was conducted openly and discussed in public documents.

As the Georgian armed forces matured, it became obvious GTEP would need to evolve. The follow-on program, the Georgian Sustainment and Stability Operations Program (GSSOP), trained and equipped Georgian forces and command staff for peace support operations in Iraq. Three Georgian brigades were trained through the GTEP and the two Sustainment and Stability Operations Programs (SSOPs).

The purpose of all follow-on programs to GTEP was to support Georgia's deployments to Iraq. SSOP and SSOP II included significant training for combat support and combat service support units, which allowed the three trained brigades to sustain themselves, have a higher degree of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) interoperability, and be able to operate at the brigade level. In the summer

of 2007, Georgia deployed a brigade of 2,000 personnel to Iraq, making it the third largest troop contributor and increasing its previous 858-person commitment there. Approximately \$64 million was expended to support GTEP. Subsequently, approximately \$124.2 million in Coalition Support funds was used to reimburse Georgia in support of SSOP, SSOP II and the latest deployment of Georgia's brigade to Iraq.

Prior to the outbreak of hostilities, the U.S. was undergoing initial military training of Georgia's 4th Brigade for its eventual deployment to Iraq in winter 2008. The Brigade was being trained with funds apportioned by the Georgian government, which the U.S. would eventually have reimbursed. Approximately \$35 million was to have been budgeted for this effort.

Georgia has been the highest per capita contributor of troops to the war on terror. To date, 7,800 Georgian soldiers have deployed to Iraq since the beginning of OIF, serving alongside U.S. forces. Over 50 served in Afghanistan during the Afghan elections in 2004. Four Georgian soldiers have paid the ultimate price and nineteen more have been wounded while serving in combat alongside U.S. and Coalition forces in Iraq. Georgia is among our staunchest allies in the war on terror.

While our defense and military relations with Georgia grew, we maintained an active military-to-military relationship with Russia. To ensure transparency, we provided regular briefings on GTEP and GSSOP activities to the Russians and periodically informed senior Russian military officers about the scope and nature of our capacity building activities. Unfortunately, it appears that the Russians have been unable to move beyond their Cold War-era "zero sum" thinking, as the actions of Russian military units to systematically eviscerate the Georgian armed forces appear, in part, to be "revenge" for these capacity-building programs.

CONSULTATIONS PRIOR TO AND DURING THE CONFLICT

The Department of Defense was deeply involved both prior to and during the onset of conflict in an effort to convince leaders on both sides to de-escalate and refrain from resolving their differences by military force. The Secretary of Defense spoke with President Saakashvili on numerous occasions, including in November 2007, and again in March 2008 during bilateral consultations in Washington. The Secretary of Defense continued to speak with his Georgian and Russian counterparts during the crisis, urging restraint and stressing that all forces must move back to pre-August 6 positions.

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff also spoke with his Georgian and Russian counterparts during the crisis. The latter explained to him that Russia had limited aims and would not seek to expand hostilities into areas controlled by the Government of Georgia. Russia's actions clearly contradicted these commitments.

Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Fata made trips to Georgia on April 17, when tensions were extremely high following the Bucharest Summit and Russian moves in Abkhazia, and again on June 30. During these trips, as part of the wide array of U.S.-Georgia bilateral defense discussions, we urged Georgia to show "restraint" and not be provoked by Russia. The consistent message was one of strategic patience and to find a peaceful resolution to the frozen conflicts, as Russia was clearly adding to tension in order to provoke a Georgian response.

As the conflict sparked, the Secretary of Defense spoke with his Russian and Georgian counterparts on Friday, August 8 and with President Saakashvili on August 9. The Secretary stressed that there were no military solutions to the conflict, as Georgia was likely to face an overwhelming Russian military action in response to any Georgian attempts to respond militarily in the separatist regions.

Despite the movements, tension, and rhetoric, which we had seen regularly in previous years, we had little warning of an impending large-scale conflict until August 7. On the 7th, we had indications of Georgia's general mobilization, as Georgian troops being trained for their future deployment to Iraq did not show up for training. The speed with which the fighting ensued and the ferocity of the conflict escalated rapidly.

There were no Department of Defense servicemembers involved in the conflict. The United States had 80 servicemembers training Georgian forces in country for future deployment to Iraq, as well as four service members who had participated in the July 15-31, in the Spirit of Partnership for Peace Immediate Response 08 exercise involving U.S., Georgian and other regional partner nations. It should also be noted that, at the request of the Georgian government, on August 10-11, the United States airlifted approximately 1,800 Georgian troops from Iraq back to Georgia, per a longstanding agreement with Georgia to provide transport for Georgian forces deployed to Iraq.

RELATIONS WITH RUSSIA

The fact that this is the first large-scale use of Russian military forces outside its borders since the fall of the Soviet Union sends a chilling message. Russia's invasion of Georgia highlights a new aggressiveness in Russian foreign policy and a willingness to use military force to achieve its goals in the near abroad.

By recognizing the Georgian territories of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, Dmitry Medvedev, Russia's president, made clear that Moscow's goal is to take advantage of the current conflict to create new facts on the ground. These actions contradict the message delivered by then-President Putin to President Bush at Sochi in April, which indicated that Russia sought to work with the international community in addressing 21st century global challenges.

In recent months, Russian officials have questioned the legality of Ukraine's sovereignty over the Crimea, openly stating the Black Sea Fleet will never leave the Ukrainian port of Sevastopol (in the Crimea), lease or not, and there are also press reports of Russia issuing passports to Ukrainian citizens in the Crimea—much like had been done in Georgia. This is a concern which we should follow closely in the months ahead.

Russia's actions in Georgia have put its relations with the rest of the world in jeopardy. The U.S., European states, G7 members and others have asked what type of relationship Russia wants with the international community. There is agreement that Russian actions are leading it towards isolation, and it must reverse course—starting in Georgia.

Russia's actions have caused a reassessment, not just of U.S. policies toward Russia, but of the European Union's (EU), of NATO's, and beyond. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization, of which Russia is a member, refused to endorse Russia's unilateral recognition of South Ossetian and Abkhaz independence; in fact, it issued a statement reaffirming the principal of territorial integrity of states. The EU, under French leadership, met in an extraordinary session to criticize Russia's disproportionate military response, condemn Russia's recognition of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, and postpone meetings on the EU—Russia Partnership Agreement. The G-8 is issuing "G-7" statements to let a fellow member know Russia's actions are not condoned by the larger group.

As the statement on Georgia at the NAC has shown, the Alliance is united in its support for Georgia's territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence. Georgia has been a strong friend and partner of NATO.

The NATO Alliance of the post-Cold War period was an alliance of democratic and Euro-Atlantic states which shared values. The NATO Alliance of today is an Alliance that will defend the values that shaped its foundation and support aspirants from external threats.

Georgia's NATO ambitions rest on fundamental shared values and a promise that NATO would keep its doors open to all aspirants ready to shoulder the responsibilities of membership. Prior to the conflict, the Georgian people and government had shown their commitment, and the U.S. and many NATO Allies felt Georgia was ready to move to the next stage to MAP. The message we send in the coming weeks and months will be heard not only by Georgians but by all those in the region who look to the west as a source of security, inspiration and freedom. We should send the right message that Russian aggression will not impact the Euro-Atlantic aspirations of Georgia and Ukraine. NATO has decided to further NATO—Georgian relations by establishing a NATO—Georgia Commission. This body will help bring Georgia even closer to NATO membership.

Although Russia has shown an apparent lack of concern for its international image in recent days by saying it does not care about the World Trade Organization and G-8 membership, it has isolated itself and will pay a diplomatic and economic price for its solitude.

Of particular note, since the start of the conflict, Russia is hemorrhaging international investment and its stock market has lost significant value. Russia may believe it has gained a tactical victory by defeating the Georgian army. Yet this victory has made it more isolated, less admired and deeply resented by its neighbors.

WHAT ARE WE DOING TODAY?

First, we must support Georgia. We seek to stabilize the situation on the ground; help the country recover and thrive economically; preserve Georgia's sovereignty; maintain our support for its territorial integrity, and assist in rebuilding its military.

Our primary concern after the outbreak of hostilities was to stop the shooting and to help the people of Georgia. Our humanitarian efforts by air, land and sea have

mitigated the human suffering and exhibited U.S. steadfast support for the Georgian people in their time of need.

As we continue with our humanitarian relief, our primary effort now is to support Georgia, and its democratically-elected government. Last week, the U.S. rolled out a \$1 billion in additional economic assistance to Georgia which will help it weather the immediate needs caused by the current crisis. As we move ahead, we look forward to working with Congress on assistance packages that best frame the U.S. commitment to Georgia and regional partners at this critical time. We also look forward to close collaboration with our multilateral development bank partners, the EU, and other international donors.

The Department of Defense has been primarily focused on fulfilling the President's commitment to provide humanitarian assistance to the people of Georgia. Through September 8, 62 sorties have delivered more than 1,145 short tons of humanitarian aid. U.S.S. *McFaul*, U.S.C.G.C. *Dallas*, and U.S.S. *Mount Whitney* have delivered humanitarian supplies through the Georgian ports of Batumi and Poti.

Georgia, like any sovereign country, should have the ability to defend itself and to deter renewed aggression. The Supreme Allied Commander, General Craddock, visited Tbilisi on August 21, meeting with high-level Georgian officials and surveying the damage to Georgia's infrastructure and military. The Department of Defense is sending an assessment team to Tbilisi later this week to help us begin to consider carefully Georgia's legitimate needs and our response. After assessments of these needs, we will review how the United States will be able to support the reconstruction of Georgia's economy, infrastructure, and armed forces. These steps will be sequenced and will continue to show U.S. support for Georgia's security, independence, and territorial integrity.

For several years, the United States has played a significant role in preparing Georgian forces to conduct counterterrorism missions, first as part of an effort to help Georgia rid its Pankisi Gorge of Chechen and other extremists and then as part of multinational coalition efforts. It is worth noting that on the night of August 7, Georgia's best-trained military forces—which represented 20 percent of its Active-Duty Forces—were on duty in Iraq in support of the multinational coalition effort there.

Georgia, in fact, fielded the third largest national contingent to the Coalition in Iraq, behind only the United States and United Kingdom. We recognize, of course, that because of the events of the past month, Georgia's own national security concerns may now mean it may be less able to contribute to such coalition efforts in the future. We will be looking carefully and responsibly at Georgia's needs over the coming weeks and months.

U.S. efforts to help Georgia will not be undertaken by us alone. NATO's North Atlantic Council decided on August 19 to develop a NATO-Georgia Commission aimed at supporting Georgia's relations with NATO. NATO has also decided to assist Georgia in assessing the damage caused by Russian military action, including to the Georgian Armed Forces, and to help restore critical services necessary for normal public life and economic activity. NATO has already sent an Advisory Support team to Georgia as well as its Special Representative for the Caucasus and Central Asia, and the North Atlantic Council Permanent Representatives plan to visit Georgia in the near future. Finland's Foreign Minister Alexander Stubb, the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, has logged many miles and worked tireless hours to help resolve the conflict. Stubb's performance has been extraordinary, he has been a star; and he has single-handedly assured that OSCE's crisis response mechanisms are fully engaged and operational.

The U.S. is also committed to demonstrate support for other friends and partners in the region especially for those such as Ukraine, Poland, and the Baltic nations, who have been threatened by Moscow. These countries must know the United States is with them, and just as importantly, Russia must know the same.

As we work to support Georgia and our Allies, we must also review our relations with Russia. We will not continue with business as usual. We have suspended our bilateral military interaction with Russia and are in the process of a comprehensive review of all activities.

CONCLUSION

Although Russia has ceased its offensive military operations, Russian forces continue to occupy parts of Georgia. Russia has not lived up to its stated obligations in the cease-fire agreement signed by Russian President Medvedev. We call on Russia to carry through with its stated promise to withdraw forces from areas outside the separatist territories, as was agreed upon in prior agreements and the September 8 agreement in Moscow with French President Sarkozy. Russia's recognition

of Abkhaz and South Ossetian independence, taken immediately after cessation of hostilities and as the conflicts' embers were still smoldering, suggests that Russian political and military aims toward Georgia were not limited to restoring the pre-war political-military status quo.

The United States, over the course of three administrations, has sought to secure and sustain the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of the new independent states of Eurasia.

Concurrently, we worked to assist Russia in its integration into the global economic community as well as to facilitate Russian cooperation with NATO in the new, post-Cold War Europe. Our regional policies were not zero-sum in nature, nor did they prioritize one country over the other. We firmly believed, and still believe, that democratic nations along Russia's borders are in Russia's best interest. Our policies contributed to a Europe, more united and integrated through either membership or close association with the EU and NATO.

Europe is freer, more prosperous and more secure than at anytime in its storied history. The policy of the United States in this region is unambiguous: we want to help the Nations of this region travel along the same path toward freedom, democracy, and market-based economies that so many of their neighbors in Europe have traveled.

We must not, and will not, allow Russia's aggression to succeed in Georgia. Nor must we miss an opportunity to link arms in solidarity with our partners and friends in the region in the face of aggression. The United States has a responsibility to support Georgia and we will be doing just that in the weeks and months ahead. We must show Russia, through our words, our policies, and our actions, that it serves Russia's best interest, as well as those of the west, for Russia to take steps to end its isolation and work towards a constructive framework of relations with the U.S. and Europe.

Thank you for your time and I look forward to your questions and hearing your concerns.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Secretary Edelman.
Secretary Fried?

**STATEMENT OF HON. DANIEL FRIED, ASSISTANT SECRETARY,
BUREAU OF EUROPEAN AND EURASIAN AFFAIRS, DEPARTMENT OF STATE**

Mr. FRIED. Thank you, Chairman Levin and members of the committee, for the opportunity to discuss the policy implications of the Russian attack on Georgia. The statement I submitted provides detail and background to the conflict. In these comments, I will focus on our strategic response.

While the causes of the conflict between Georgia and the disputed regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia are complex, essential elements are clear. After a long series of provocations, Georgian forces moved into South Ossetia on August 7. Whatever questions we have about this decision, there is no justification for Russia's response, which was to cross international boundaries and attack Georgia. This was the first time since the end of the Soviet Union that Moscow has sent military forces to attack another country.

The United States had urged Russia and Georgia numerous times, publicly and privately, to exercise restraint and to resolve their differences peacefully. After fighting broke out on August 7, our efforts were focused on halting the violence and bringing about a ceasefire. On August 14, Secretary Rice flew to France to consult with President Sarkozy, who is representing the EU in efforts to negotiate a ceasefire. The next day, Secretary Rice took the ceasefire agreement to Georgia to clarify its terms and to obtain President Saakashvili's signature. She succeeded.

But Russia has yet to fully honor the terms of that ceasefire that President Medvedev also signed. Its forces remain inside Georgia. Worse, on August 26 Russia escalated the conflict when it recognized the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, in defiance of numerous United Nations (U.N.) Security Council resolutions which Russia itself had endorsed. This irresponsible and destabilizing action has since been condemned by the EU, NATO, key allies, and the foreign ministers of the G-7 countries. Only Nicaragua and, I should add, the terrorist group Hamas have so far followed Russia's lead and recognized these breakaway regions.

Our response to Russia's use of force to attempt to change international borders centers on three key objectives: First, we must support Georgia. We intend to help Georgia recover economically, restore its sovereignty and territorial integrity, and address its legitimate military needs. As an urgent priority, we support President Sarkozy's ongoing efforts to convince Russia to honor the ceasefire. Russian troops must leave Georgia and Georgian refugees must be allowed to return to their homes.

On September 3, Secretary Rice announced a major effort to help Georgia in its economic reconstruction. \$570 million, the first phase of a \$1 billion economic support package, will be made available by the end of this year, including emergency direct support to the Georgian government. We will work closely with Congress on details of this assistance and hope that there will be strong bipartisan backing for a second phase of support, an additional \$430 million to be provided in the future.

Like any sovereign country, Georgia should have the ability to defend itself and to deter aggression. So we are working with NATO to address Georgia's military needs and we are working bilaterally. DOD has sent an assessment team to Tbilisi to help determine Georgia's needs and with our allies develop an appropriate response.

Second, we must prevent Russia from drawing a new line through Europe. Russia should not be allowed to declare that certain nations belong to Moscow's sphere of influence and therefore cannot join the institutions of Europe and the trans-Atlantic region. The United States does not believe in spheres of influence. Since the fall of the Berlin Wall, we have supported the right of every country emerging from communism to choose the path of its own development, including the international institutions with which it wants to associate. Russia should not be able to veto the right of sovereign countries to choose their own future.

This was one of Vice President Cheney's messages when he visited Georgia, Abkhazia, and Ukraine last week. This is what "Europe, whole, free, in peace" means. This vision is not directed against Russia. On the contrary, we have always believed that this vision should include Russia. But Russia's actions at home and abroad have been increasingly inconsistent with the common values that constitute the foundation of the Euro-Atlantic community. The current aggression against Georgia shows that Russia is making a different choice for itself.

Finally, therefore, our strategic response must include longer-term consequences for our relationship with Russia. Since 1991, U.S. policy toward Russia was based on the assumption that Rus-

sia sought integration with the world and was, perhaps unevenly, moving toward greater democracy and the rule of law at home. Indeed, Russia expressed interest in and made progress toward becoming part of key institutions—the World Trade Organization (WTO), Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the G-7, G-8—and a partner with NATO and the EU.

But with its invasion of Georgia, Russia has put these aspirations at risk. Russia has a choice. It can seek to be a nation at peace with itself and its neighbors, a modern 21st century nation that expresses its power and influence in constructive ways, or it can be mired in 19th century expansionist ambition, a nation whose standing in the world is based not on how much respect it can earn, but on how much fear it can evoke in others.

Russia cannot have it both ways. It cannot benefit from the international institutions it wants to join and also invade its neighbor and use war to change international borders.

We hope Russia chooses the right path. But for now we must contend with the Russia that exists today. We are guided by some general principles as we move forward. Russia should understand that the course it is on is already leading to self-isolation. The United States and Europe must work together to respond to the challenge Russia has presented and to help nations on Russia's border resist Moscow's pressure even as they maintain their reforms at home.

We must be steady, determined, and patient in our relations with Russia. Our response must keep open the possibility that Russia will reconsider its current course and we should keep doors open for cooperation on issues of mutual concern, such as Iran, counterterrorism, Afghanistan, nonproliferation, and other issues.

But we must also be prepared, if Russia continues its aggressive course, particularly against neighbors who want closer security relations with us and with NATO. We do not seek and are not doomed to have a bad relationship with Russia. But until Russia's leaders change this current path, they and we may be in for a difficult period ahead.

As we consider the implications of Russia's attack on Georgia, realism requires us to face what Russia has done and what we must do. We will support our friends and our principles. Russian aggression cannot be allowed to succeed. In time, Russia may realize that aggression against a small neighbor was a grave mistake. In the meantime, we need to maintain a framework for U.S.-Russian relations with the understanding that the perspective of today's Russian leaders will not last forever.

We will resist Russian aggression where we must, working with our friends and allies, and we will keep open channels of communication and even cooperation where we can, for history teaches that patience and determination, frustrating perhaps at first, tend to prevail in the end.

Thank you. I look forward to taking your questions. I would also like to say that I fully endorse the remarks of my colleague and old friend, Under Secretary Edelman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Fried follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY HON. DANIEL FRIED

“THE CURRENT SITUATION IN GEORGIA AND IMPLICATIONS FOR U.S. POLICY”

Chairman Levin, Ranking Member McCain, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to discuss with you today the implications of Russia’s attack on Georgia.

On June 18, in testimony before the House Foreign Affairs Committee, I outlined a series of examples of increasing Russian pressure on Georgia and expressed concern that these activities risked igniting a wider conflict.

Today, with regret, I must report to this committee that these concerns have been realized. Russia’s intensified pressure and provocations against Georgia—combined with a serious Georgian miscalculation—have resulted not only in armed conflict, but in an ongoing Russian attempt to dismember that country.

The causes of this conflict—particularly the dispute between Georgia and its breakaway regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia—are complex, and all sides made mistakes and miscalculations. But key facts are clear: Russia sent its army across an internationally recognized boundary, to attempt to change by force the borders of a country with a democratically-elected government and, if possible, overthrow that government—not to relieve humanitarian pressures on Russian citizens, as it claimed.

This is the first time since the breakup of the Soviet Union that Moscow has sent its military across an international frontier in such circumstances, and this is Moscow’s first attempt to change the borders that emerged from the breakup of the Soviet Union. This is a troubling and dangerous act.

Today I will seek to explain how we got here, how we’re responding, and the implications for our relationship with Russia.

BACKGROUND TO THE CONFLICT

First, some history.

The dissolution of empires is frequently violent, and the break up of the former Soviet Union was no exception. The collapse of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was marked by ethnically-based violence, especially in the South Caucasus. This involved clashes between Azeris and Armenians, Ossetians and Ingush, Russians and Chechens, Abkhaz and Georgians, and others. These clashes deepened into a series of wars in the early 1990s that ended without lasting solutions. Uneasy truces followed, and the conflicts in areas outside Russia became known as “frozen conflicts.”

Two of the disputed regions lie within the internationally-recognized territorial borders of Georgia: Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

In 1992, following 2 years of armed conflict between Georgians and South Ossetians, an armistice was signed by Russian, Georgian, and South Ossetian leaders. The leaders also agreed on the creation of a tripartite peacekeeping force of 500 soldiers each from Russia, Georgia, and North Ossetia, a territory which lies within the borders of Russia. In practice, however, the North Ossetian peacekeeping contingent ended up being staffed by South Ossetians. Fighting in Abkhazia was brutal in those years and, as a result, large numbers of ethnic Georgians were expelled from their homes in Abkhazia; before the fighting, the ethnic Abkhaz had been a minority—under 20 percent—in Abkhazia.

The next year, 1993, South Ossetia drafted its own constitution, and 3 years after that, in 1996, South Ossetia elected its own “president” in an election in which mainly ethnic Ossetians—not ethnic Georgians—voted.

In 2001, South Ossetia held another election and elected Eduard Kokoity as president, again with most ethnic Georgians boycotting the election. The following year, in 2002, he asked Moscow to recognize South Ossetia’s independence and absorb it into Russia.

Throughout this period, Russia acted to support the South Ossetian and Abkhaz leaderships, sowing the seeds of future conflict. That support was not only political, but concrete, and never more so than through the continued presence of Russian military forces, including those labeled as peacekeepers.

Georgia emerged from these post-Soviet wars in weak condition. While then-President Shevardnadze deserves credit for helping end the fighting, Georgia could not find its feet; its economy remained weak and its government relatively ineffective. By the early years of this century, Georgia was in danger of becoming a failed state, with a deteriorating economy and a political system near collapse. In the autumn of 2003, President Shevardnadze acquiesced in an attempt by a local Georgian strongman—Ajaran leader Aslan Abashidze—to steal Georgia’s parliamentary elec-

tion. This triggered a popular uprising of hundreds of thousands of Georgians, leading to the so-called Rose Revolution and Mikheil Saakashvili's election as president.

It is important to note that Eduard Shevardnadze was a close friend and partner of the United States and our North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Allies, enjoying near-heroic status. His ouster was not something the United States favored. Yet, when the Georgian people spoke and demonstrated their democratic right of peaceful protest, we did not stand in their way. We also did not encourage the protests. But Georgians' thirst for democracy ran its course, and we accepted and supported the outcome.

Following his 2004 election, Saakashvili and his government moved swiftly and effectively to improve governance in Georgia, reducing corruption, pushing through economic reforms, and welcoming foreign investment. The Georgian economy started to grow rapidly. At the same time, Saakashvili made clear his intention that Georgia follow the path of other successful post-communist democracies and draw closer to, and eventually join, NATO and the European Union (EU). Although they have developed significantly in the past few years, Georgian democratic institutions remain weak and much work needs to be done to deepen democratic practices and continue economic reforms; authoritarian practices still exist alongside more democratic ones. We have made known, and made clear in public, our concerns with some of these democratic deficits. Still, Georgia appeared to be following the general contours of successful post-communist transformation we have seen since 1989 in Central and Eastern Europe.

This progress, however, was paralleled by increasing tensions between Georgia and the Russian-supported breakaway territories.

After the Rose Revolution, more clashes occurred between Georgians and South Ossetians, and between Georgians and Abkhaz. Then in 2006, South Ossetians voted for a split from Georgia in a referendum that was, again, largely boycotted by ethnic Georgians in South Ossetia. Although there were efforts to resolve the differences through negotiations, by late 2007 talks had essentially broken down.

As Georgia's ambitions to draw close to Europe and the transatlantic community became clearer, its relations with Russia deteriorated. In the summer of 2006, tension increased between Tbilisi and Moscow, as Georgia arrested several Russian military intelligence officers it accused of conducting bombings in Gori. Moscow responded with a vengeance, closing Russia's only road crossing with Georgia, suspending air and mail links, imposing embargoes against exports of Georgian wine, mineral water, and agricultural goods, and even rounding up people living in Russia (including school children) with ethnic Georgian names and deporting them. At least two Georgians died during the deportation process.

Russia's provocations escalated in 2007. In March 2007, what we believe were Russian attack helicopters launched an aerial assault, combined with artillery fire, on the Georgian Government's administrative offices in Abkhazia's Upper Kodori Valley. In August, Russian fighter jets violated Georgian airspace, then unsuccessfully launched a missile toward a Georgian radar station.

This past year, although Moscow lifted some of the economic and transport embargoes, it further intensified the political pressure by taking a number of steps toward establishing an administrative relationship with both South Ossetia and Abkhazia. In March 2008, Russia announced its unilateral withdrawal from Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) sanctions on Abkhazia, thus removing the CIS prohibition on providing direct economic and military assistance. Then in April, following the NATO Summit in Bucharest where NATO leaders declared that Georgia would one day be a member of the alliance, then-President Putin issued instructions calling for closer official ties between Russian ministries and their counterparts in both of the disputed regions.

Russia also increased military pressure as Russian officials and military personnel were seconded to serve in both the governments and the armed forces of the separatist regions. South Ossetia's "prime minister," "defense minister," and "security minister," for example, are all seconded Russian officials. While Russian peacekeepers in Abkhazia were specifically mandated to facilitate the return of internally displaced persons and refugees, we saw no net return of Georgians to Abkhazia in over a decade.

On April 20, the Russian pressure took a more ominous turn when a Russian fighter jet shot down an unarmed Georgian unmanned aerial vehicle over Georgian airspace in Abkhazia. Russia also increased its military presence in Abkhazia without the required consultation with the Government of Georgia. In late April, Russia sent highly-trained airborne combat troops with howitzers to Abkhazia, ostensibly as part of its peacekeeping force. Then in May, Russia dispatched construction troops to Abkhazia to repair a railroad link to Russia.

During this buildup of tension, the United States frequently called on Moscow to reverse Russian actions and to participate with us and key European allies in a diplomatic process to resolve these conflicts. In June and July, for example, the U.N. Friends of Georgia group, which included the United States, Germany, the U.K., and France, urged fellow Friends of Georgia to engage in invigorated negotiations to advance Georgia's peace plan for Abkhazia. Yet Russia resisted, in one case even failing to show up for a meeting in mid-June that President Medvedev promised Russia would attend. In July, Georgia accepted the Western Friends' request that Russia and Georgia join the U.N. friends and the Abkhaz for discussions to reduce tension and advance the peace process. But once again Russia's Foreign Ministry refused to send a representative, this time saying that "everyone was on vacation."

During this time, we urged Georgian officials both publicly and privately, on many occasions, to resist the temptation of any military reaction, even in the face of repeated provocations, which they were clearly facing. President Saakashvili did, to his credit, offer extensive autonomy to Abkhazia, including a guarantee that a Vice President of Georgia would be from Abkhazia. In July, Secretary Rice traveled to Tbilisi to seek to intensify diplomatic efforts to reduce the growing tensions. Working closely with counterparts from Germany, France, and the United Kingdom, she called for intensified diplomatic efforts on an urgent basis. While expressing support for Georgia, she also cautioned President Saakashvili against any temptation to use force to resolve these conflicts, even in the face of continued provocations.

Unfortunately, Russia resisted these European-American efforts to intensify diplomatic efforts to stave off a wider conflict. After Russian military aircraft overflew Georgian airspace in July, in violation of Georgia's sovereignty, while Secretary Rice was visiting Tbilisi, President Saakashvili recalled Georgia's ambassador to Moscow.

August began with two bomb explosions in Georgian-controlled territory in South Ossetia, injuring five Georgian policemen. On August 2, a firefought broke out in South Ossetia that killed six South Ossetians and one Georgian policeman. On August 3, Russia declared that South Ossetia was close to a "large-scale" military conflict, and the next day, South Ossetia evacuated hundreds of women and children to Russia.

On August 5, Moscow issued a statement saying that it would defend Russian citizens in South Ossetia. It is important to note that these so-called Russian citizens were mainly South Ossetians—that is to say, Georgian citizens—to whom Russia had simply handed out Russian passports. Russia has carried out this potentially destabilizing practice of distributing Russian passports to citizens of other neighbors from the former Soviet Union for years.

On August 6, both Georgia and South Ossetia accused each other of opening fire on villages in the region.

THE ASSAULT ON GEORGIA

Throughout this period, the United States worked with both Georgia and South Ossetia, and with Russia, seeking to tamp down the growing conflict. On August 7 Georgia's minister for conflict resolution traveled to South Ossetia for negotiations, but his South Ossetian counterpart refused to meet with him and his Russian colleague failed to show up, claiming his car had broken down. On the night of August 7, those pressures rose to heights never before seen. Shooting broke out between Georgia and South Ossetian armed forces in South Ossetia. Georgia declared a ceasefire, but it did not hold. The Georgians told us that South Ossetians had fired on Georgian villages from behind the position of Russian peacekeepers. The Georgians also told us that Russian troops and heavy military equipment were entering the Roki Tunnel border crossing with Russia.

We had warned the Georgians many times in the previous days and weeks against using force, and on August 7, we warned them repeatedly not to take such a step. We pointed out that use of military force, even in the face of provocations, would lead to a disaster. We were blunt in conveying these points, not subtle. Our message was clear.

Georgia's move into the South Ossetian capital provided Russia a pretext for a response that quickly grew far out of proportion to the actions taken by Georgia. There will be a time for assessing blame for what happened in the early hours of the conflict, but one fact is clear—there was no justification for Russia's invasion of Georgia. There was no justification for Russia to seize Georgian territory, including territory well beyond South Ossetia and Abkhazia in violation of Georgia's sovereignty, or to attack and destroy infrastructure.

But that is what occurred. On August 8, the Russians poured across the international border, crossed the boundaries of South Ossetia past where the conflict was occurring, and pushed their way into much of the rest of Georgia. Several thousand

Russian forces moved into the city of Gori and other areas far from the conflict zone, such as Georgia's main port of Poti, over 200 kilometers from South Ossetia. Russia also used the fighting as an excuse to seize the last Georgian-held portion of Abkhazia, where there had been no fighting.

The full story of that invasion and what occurred when the Russian forces dug in and allowed "irregular" South Ossetian militias to rampage through the lands Russian forces had seized, is still not fully known. We have received evidence of the burning of Georgian villages in South Ossetia. Russia's invasion resulted in a large number of internally displaced ethnic Georgians who fled South Ossetia to Tbilisi and other Georgian towns. Although Russian forces attempted to prevent access to the area by humanitarian aid workers, some Human Rights Watch researchers were able to reach the area and reported that the Russian military had used "indiscriminate force" and "seemingly targeted attacks on civilians," including civilian convoys. They said Russian aircraft dropped cluster bombs in populated areas and allowed looting, arson attacks, and abductions in Georgian villages by militia groups. The researchers also reported that Georgian forces used "indiscriminate" and "disproportionate" force during their assault on South Ossetian forces in Tskhinvali and neighboring villages in South Ossetia. Senior Russian leaders have sought to support their claims of Georgian "genocide" against the South Ossetian people by claiming that 2,000 civilians were killed by Georgian forces in the initial assault. Human Rights Watch has called this figure of 2,000 dead "exaggerated" and "suspicious." Other subsequent Russian government and South Ossetian investigations have suggested much lower numbers. We are continuing to look at these and other reports while we attempt to assemble reliable information about who did what in those days.

The Ceasefire, Russia's failure to honor it, and recognition of South Ossetia and Abkhazia

In the days that followed the Russian invasion, our attention was focused on halting the violence and bringing about a ceasefire. President Bush spoke with a number of European leaders as well as with President Saakashvili, President Medvedev and Prime Minister Putin in an effort to halt the fighting. Secretary Rice dispatched Deputy Assistant Secretary Matthew Bryza to Tbilisi to maintain contact with the Georgian leaders, working with Ambassador John Tefft. She herself worked with the Georgians and Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov, and with key Europeans including the French as EU President, and Finnish Foreign Minister Stubb, in Finland's role as Chairman-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, to seek to halt the fighting.

On August 14, Secretary Rice flew to France to consult with President Sarkozy, and then flew to Georgia to seek—and successfully obtain—President Saakashvili's signature on a ceasefire agreement. President Sarkozy had negotiated a six-point agreement which included the following:

1. No resort to force.
2. A definitive halt to hostilities.
3. Provision of free access for humanitarian assistance.
4. Georgian military forces must withdraw to the places they are usually stationed.
5. Russian forces must withdraw to their positions prior to the outbreak of hostilities. While awaiting an international mechanism, Russian peace-keeping forces will implement additional security measures.
6. Opening of international discussions on security and stability modalities in Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

The U.S. role in this process was central and timely. The Georgians had questions about the ceasefire agreement, so we worked with the French who issued a clarifying letter addressing some of Georgia's concerns. Secretary Rice conveyed the draft Ceasefire Agreement and the letter to President Saakashvili the next day. Based on these assurances, some additional assurances from the French, and the assurances of our support, President Saakashvili signed the ceasefire agreement on August 15.

The Ceasefire Accord provides for the withdrawal of Russian forces from Georgia to their positions before the hostilities began, and allows for peacekeepers in South Ossetia, limited to the numbers allowed under previous agreements, to conduct patrols a few kilometers from the conflict zone in South Ossetia, not including any cities and not in ways that impede freedom of movement.

Here is what the Ceasefire Accord does not provide: it does not establish a buffer zone; it does not allow the Russians to set up checkpoints around Georgia's ports or along Georgia's main highways and other transportation links; and it does not allow the Russians to have any forces whatsoever in places such as Poti, 200 kilometers from South Ossetia.

This agreement was signed—and should have been honored immediately—by Russian President Medvedev, who had promised to French President Sarkozy Russia's immediate withdrawal upon President Saakashvili's signature of the Ceasefire. Yet Russia has still not lived up to the requirements of the Ceasefire Agreement requirements. In these circumstances, with Russia's having failed to honor the terms of the Ceasefire Agreement and its promise to withdraw its forces, Secretary Rice flew to Brussels for an emergency NATO meeting on August 19 and, with our Allies, produced a statement in support of Georgia's territorial integrity and sovereignty—a statement that was stronger than anyone thought possible.

Russia, still failing to honor the Ceasefire Agreement, again escalated the conflict on August 26 when it recognized the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. It did so in defiance of numerous United Nations Security Council resolutions that Russia approved and that explicitly affirmed Georgia's territorial integrity. That the underlying separatist conflicts must be resolved peacefully, through international negotiations. This outrageous and irresponsible action was condemned by the EU, NATO's Secretary General, key Allies, and—in an unprecedented move—the foreign ministers of the G7 countries. Other than Russia and the South Ossetia and Abkhazia separatist regimes themselves, Nicaragua is the only country that has recognized these territories as independent countries.

Following the EU Summit on September 1, President Sarkozy traveled to Moscow on September 8 to again seek Russia's compliance with the Ceasefire.

This has been a fast-moving situation, but that is where we find ourselves today.

OUR STRATEGIC RESPONSE

In the face of this Russian assault on Georgia, the United States is pursuing three key objectives.

First, we must support Georgia. We seek to stabilize the situation on the ground; help the country recover and thrive economically; preserve Georgia's sovereignty; maintain our support for its territorial integrity, and democracy; in the early stages of the conflict, Foreign Minister Lavrov asserted that Russia sought the removal of President Saakashvili, a democratically-elected leader. Russia has not succeeded.

We are active, working with our European allies, in putting pressure on Russia to adhere to the Ceasefire. Russia must withdraw its military forces from Georgia, back to the lines of August 7; Russia is allowed limited patrolling rights by its recognized peacekeepers in the immediate vicinity of South Ossetia only until such time as an international mechanism is developed to take their place. So we are working fast with the EU and the OSCE to put in place just such a mechanism. We are also preparing to launch international discussions on South Ossetia and Abkhazia, again working closely with our European partners.

We have already taken immediate steps to address Georgia's humanitarian needs. The United States has provided more than \$38 million worth of humanitarian aid and emergency relief, including food, shelter, and medical supplies, to assist the people of Georgia. U.S. aircraft made a total of 62 relief flights to Georgia from August 13 through September 4, and on August 24 and 27, 115 tons of emergency relief commodities arrived in Batumi on the U.S.S. *McFaul* and the U.S.C.G.C. *Dallas*. In addition, a third ship, the U.S.S. *Mount Whitney* anchored in Poti on September 5, delivering an additional 17 tons of emergency relief commodities that will be delivered by the United States Agency for International Development nongovernmental organization partners. On September 3, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported that 90,500 individuals have returned to places of origin, following the August conflict. However, UNHCR staff note that the number of returnees may be significantly higher due to the passage of time, as well as the difficulty of accurate, in-field returnee counts. According to UNHCR, approximately 30,000 individuals may be displaced in the long term. We have been working with the Government of Georgia and seven relief organizations to ensure that our assistance gets to internally displaced people and other conflict-affected populations.

On September 3, Secretary Rice announced a major effort to help meet Georgia's pressing humanitarian needs, repair infrastructure damaged by Russia's invasion, sustain commercial confidence, and restore economic growth. \$570 million, the first phase of a \$1 billion United States economic support package, will be made available by the end of 2008 and will include emergency budget support to the Georgian Government. We will be working extensively with Congress in the days to come to fine tune how the assistance will be delivered. We are hopeful that there will be strong bipartisan backing for a second phase of support, an additional \$430 million to be provided in future budgets.

Georgia, like any sovereign country, should have the ability to defend itself and to deter renewed aggression. The Department of Defense has sent an assessment

team to Tbilisi to help us begin to consider carefully Georgia's legitimate needs and, working with our Allies, develop our response. For several years, the United States has played a significant role in preparing Georgian forces to conduct counterterrorism missions, first as part of an effort to help Georgia rid its Pankisi Gorge of Chechen and other extremists and then as part of multinational coalition efforts. NATO's North Atlantic Council decided on August 19 to develop a NATO-Georgia Commission aimed at supporting Georgia's relations with NATO. NATO has also decided to help Georgia assess the damage caused by Russia's invasion, including to the Georgian armed forces, and to help restore critical services necessary for normal public life and economic activity. NATO has already sent an advisory support team to Georgia and its Special Representative for the Caucasus and Central Asia. The North Atlantic Council Permanent Representatives plan to visit Georgia in the near future. Finland's Foreign Minister Alexander Stubb, the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, showed strong and effective leadership in working with French Foreign Minister Kouchner to lay the diplomatic foundation for the ceasefire agreement and activate the OSCE's crisis response mechanisms.

Our second key objective is to prevent Russia from drawing a line down the center of Europe and declaring that nations on the wrong side of that line belong to Moscow's "sphere of influence" and therefore cannot join the great institutions of Europe and the transatlantic family. President Medvedev's recent statement of Russia's foreign policy principles implies such a claim.

The United States does not believe in or recognize "spheres of influence." Since 1989, the United States—under the leadership of President George H.W. Bush, President Clinton, and President George W. Bush—has supported the right of every country emerging from communism to choose the path of its own development, and to choose the institutions—such as NATO and the EU—that it wants to associate with and join. Each country must show itself ready to meet the standards of the institutions it seeks to join. That is its responsibility, and Georgia and Ukraine should be treated no differently than other European countries seeking to join European and transatlantic institutions.

NATO and EU enlargement has been the institutional embodiment of the slogan, "Europe whole, free, and at peace." A Europe whole, free, and at peace has been good for Europe, good for the countries on Europe's periphery, and, I would argue, good for Russia, which now faces the most benign set of countries to its west in all of its history.

Europe whole, free, and at peace should include Russia; and throughout this process the United States and Europe sought to deepen ties with Russia in parallel with the growth of western institutions throughout all of Europe. But Europe whole, free, and at peace certainly does not mean that Russia gets to veto the right of independent countries to choose their future, and especially not through intimidation and threats. We want to respect Russia's legitimate interests. But we will not sacrifice small nations on the altar of great power expediency.

IMPLICATIONS FOR RELATIONS WITH RUSSIA.

Finally, our strategic response must include the longer-term consequences of the invasion of Georgia for our relationship with Russia. Since 1991, three U.S. administrations have based policy toward Russia on the assumption that Russia—perhaps in fits and starts, imperfectly and in its own way—sought to become a nation integrated with the world: a "normal nation," that is, part of the international system and its institutions. For its part, since 1991 Russia has asserted its own interest in becoming a part of the world and a part of international institutions. Russia had made progress in this regard, with American and European support.

But with its invasion of Georgia, its continuing refusal to implement the Ceasefire it has signed, and its apparent claim to a "sphere of influence," Russia has put these assumptions under question and these aspirations at risk.

Russia's behavior in Georgia recalls bad traditions of years we had believed behind us: 1979 and Afghanistan, 1968 and Czechoslovakia, 1956 and Hungary, 1921 and Georgia, and numerous Russian imperial interventions in the 19th century. Russia's assault on Georgia follows other troubling signs: threats against Poland, including the threat of nuclear attack; suspicious poisonings and killings of journalists and those deemed "undesirable" persons such as Aleksandr Litvinenko, Anna Politkovskaya, and even President Yushchenko of Ukraine; the apparent use of energy for the purposes of political pressure against Ukraine, Lithuania and the Czech Republic; the concentration of political power in one party and focused in the Kremlin; and the creation in the state-controlled Russian media of an "enemy image" of the United States. Many believe that there is a relationship between these troubling events and increasing government control of and pressure on what should be inde-

pendent institutions in Russia, including the parliament, political parties, non-governmental organizations, the media, and the courts.

We can speculate on the sources of such Russian behavior. We in the United States looked on the period of the 1990s as one of hope for Russian democratic reform and international integration in the immediate post-Soviet period. But Russians do not look back on the 1990s with nostalgia, and certainly not with regret. They look on this decade as a period of chaos and impoverishment at home, and humiliation and decline of influence abroad. Most Russians welcomed what they believed was stability and greater international respect that then-President Putin gained for Russia in the world. They welcome Russia's steady economic growth, even if many realize this is to a great extent no more than a function of high oil and gas prices; and they welcome what they see as Russia's return to a period of greater order at home and more respect abroad. They believe that it is only right that Russia should assert its interests in its immediate neighborhood.

We should understand the sources of such views. But to understand them is not to accept or excuse them. It is not a mark of return to national greatness to have launched an invasion of a smaller, weaker neighbor, or to use language of threats and intimidation against other neighbors. Worse, in an echo of the Brezhnev Doctrine's right of intervention, some Russian officials have suggested a right to intervene on behalf of Russian citizens anywhere in the former Soviet Union and beyond. If Russia is simply creating these "citizens" by handing out Russian passports to non-Russians in neighboring countries, as it did in South Ossetia and Abkhazia, then this is a formula that can be abused, and is perhaps designed to be abused, to justify aggressive purposes.

There is another and more constructive side to Russian official thinking. Earlier this year, Dmitriy Medvedev made an eloquent speech in which he presented his vision of a Russia governed on the basis of the rule of law, and fully integrated in the 21st century global economy. He spoke persuasively of a modern Russia, rooted in the rule of law—strong, to be sure, but strong in the measure of power for the 21st century, not the 19th century. We in the west, and many Russians, took encouragement from his words—words that now ring hollow.

Russia has a choice to make. It can seek to be a nation at peace with itself and its neighbors, a modern nation establishing its power and influence in modern and constructive ways, as President Medvedev's post-election vision suggested.

Or Russia can choose to be a nation whose standing in the world is based not on how much respect it can earn, but on how much fear it can evoke in others. Russia cannot have it both ways. Russia, sadly, seems to be seeking to build national power based on attempts to dominate and the threat or use of force or pressure against its neighbors. By its actions in recent weeks, Russia has put itself in opposition to Europe and the transatlantic community with which it claimed partnership.

We hope Russia, even now, can choose a better path. But we must also contend with the Russia that lies before us, and the signs are not good.

HOW SHALL THE WEST RESPOND?

I have already spoken of our support for Georgia and our efforts to blunt Russian attempts to draw a new line, or curtain, through Eastern Europe. But we must also respond to Russia itself.

First, we must help Russians understand that the course they are now on is already leading to self-isolation in the world. Russia has been condemned by the EU, the Chair of the OSCE, and for the first time ever by its G8 partners, by the foreign ministers of G7 countries. If Russia continues its current course of defiance and failure to honor its agreements, this self-isolation will deepen, with profound implications for Russia's relations with key international institutions.

Second, the west must work and act together. The United States and its European allies have responded in coordinated fashion to the Georgia crisis, and must continue to do so. The United States and Europe working together will have far more impact on Russia than we will have by working alone. Europe and the United States also need to show solidarity and determination to resist Russian pressure on other, smaller European nations on its border, whether this takes the form of military threats, cyber attacks, or economic intimidation using energy as a weapon. We shall consider specific steps thoughtfully and in light of Russia's behavior in the coming weeks, including whether it adheres to the Ceasefire Accord or if it continues to fail to comply with its terms, as Russia is now doing.

Third, as we look ahead at our relations with Russia, we must be steady, determined, and patient. It will take time for the Russian people and their leaders to comprehend the cost of Russia's growing isolation. The recent flight of billions of

dollars from Russian equity markets is only an initial sign of the costs to Russia over time of its behavior.

Fourth, our response must keep open the possibility of Russian reconsideration of its current course, and keep doors open for cooperation. There are areas where we and Russia have overlapping interests—this was true before Russia invaded Georgia and it is still true now, whether it is in Iran, counterterrorism, Afghanistan, or other issues.

Fifth, we must also remember that Russia may choose to continue its aggressive course, particularly against neighbors who have aspirations for closer security relations with us and NATO. Prime Minister Putin has questioned Ukraine's territorial integrity as well as Georgia's, and President Medvedev has threatened to use "military means" to stop Poland's plans to host missile defense components. Russia will be ill-advised to pursue a course of continued threats against its neighbors. As British Foreign Secretary David Miliband put it, we do not want a new Cold War; Russia has a responsibility not to start one.

We do not seek, and are not doomed to have, a bad relationship with Russia. Russia's development in the 21st century will require it to have a cooperative, not antagonistic, relationship with Europe, the United States, and the developed world. For better or worse, Russians value their place in the community of European nations. Moreover, Russia must contend with its serious problems at home: a shrinking and aging population, a lopsided economy, and now international isolation. Russia is poorly positioned to sustain a bad relationship with Europe and the United States.

Wiser heads in Russia understand this, and may themselves realize that long-term self-isolation will not prove to be a successful strategy for Russia. The Russian economy will require investment, access to capital and technology, and, over time, greater adherence to the rule of law than is the case today. Investors will make their own decisions. But they generally seek a stable relationship with their economic partners and a predictable climate for their investments. The message Russia has sent by its recent actions is that this kind of stability and predictability can no longer be assumed.

Russia is not doomed to authoritarianism at home and aggression against its neighbors. Those are the choices that Russia's leaders are currently making. Unless they change their path, we are in for a difficult period ahead.

But even in the Soviet period, we maintained both channels of communications with the Russians and a relationship in hope of better times. In time, our relations did improve as the internal weakness of the Soviet system became more obvious and the west stood firm against Soviet expansionism.

As we consider the implications of Russia's attack on Georgia, realism requires us to face clearly what Russia has done and what we must do. We must support our friends and our principles. Russian aggression cannot be allowed to succeed; in time, if we are successful, the Russians may come to realize that a one-sided victory over a small neighbor's military was a grave mistake. In the meantime, our responsibility for the future requires us to maintain the basis of a framework for U.S.-Russian relations, given the knowledge that the perspective of today's Russian leaders will not last forever. So let us prepare to resist Russian aggression where we must, working with our friends and allies; and let us be mindful of—and keep open—channels of communication where we can, for history teaches that the aggressor may strike and win a first round, but seldom wins the last.

Thank you. I look forward to taking your questions.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Secretary Fried.

General Paxton and General Flynn, I understand you do not have opening statements. Is that correct?

General PAXTON. That's correct, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

What we'll do is have an 8-minute round of questions for the first round, and when I call upon Senator Warner he'll have some additional time for any opening statement that he might wish to add.

Let me first ask you, Secretary Edelman and Secretary Fried, about the warnings that were given to Georgia. There was a great deal of public statements about these warnings that were given to Georgia, but there's also an allegation that there was some mixed signals given to Georgia about what our response would be.

This morning you both very clearly indicated that we told the Georgians many times that they should not use military force, or initiate any ground operations. I want to start with you perhaps, Secretary Fried, because you apparently had some of these conversations. Would you outline for us when and where those conversations took place where we urged the Georgians, warned the Georgians that they should not initiate any ground action against South Ossetia, or into South Ossetia?

Mr. FRIED. Mr. Chairman, for many months I, my colleagues, and Secretary Rice had told the Georgians clearly and unequivocally that any military action initiated by them would be a mistake and lead to a disaster. We were not terribly subtle. We were not indirect. We were quite clear and occasionally blunt.

In the spring, during a period of tension over Abkhazia, my colleagues and I made these points repeatedly to the Georgian leadership. Secretary Rice, during her trip to Tbilisi in July, made these points directly to President Saakashvili. As tension in South Ossetia mounted in the first week, the first days of August, we repeated these points and made them. On August 7, as tensions were mounting, we told the Georgians that they should not fall victim to provocations, that, whatever their fears and concerns, a military response would be a mistake.

It is true that we gave them warnings. It is not true that we presented them with mixed signals.

Chairman LEVIN. In the August warnings prior to August 7, can you just be more specific? When and where were those warnings given, to whom, and by whom? Were you involved?

Mr. FRIED. I was involved personally.

Chairman LEVIN. Over the phone, or—

Mr. FRIED. Sometimes over the phone, sometimes in Tbilisi when I would travel there.

Chairman LEVIN. Before August 7?

Mr. FRIED. Yes.

Chairman LEVIN. In August?

Mr. FRIED. In August over the phone. The weekend—let's see; that would have been August 1. The weekend before, the end of July, first days in August, about South Ossetia.

Chairman LEVIN. These were over the phone?

Mr. FRIED. These were over the phone and in person with the Georgian ambassador. They were also when I traveled to Tbilisi with Secretary Rice, and also on my own. It was a regular feature of my discussions that I would urge the Georgians not to fall victim to any provocations.

Chairman LEVIN. What was their response?

Mr. FRIED. Their response was: that they knew that a military operation would be a disaster, but that if their villages were attacked and their people were under assault they would be under grave pressure to do something. To which I would invariably reply: That's not a good enough reason to make a wrong decision.

So the conversations were blunt, they were clear. It is true that the Georgians felt themselves to be and in fact were under severe provocation. Their villages were attacked. A Russian plane had shot down a Georgian drone over Abkhazia. Russian-led forces

came into firefights with Georgians in Abkhazia. There were numerous provocations.

We also had conversations with the Russians. But nevertheless, our messages were not mixed; they were quite clear.

Chairman LEVIN. Now, you both talked about the importance of there being consequences to the Russian aggression here against Georgia, and I'd like to know what are some of the consequences which are being looked at? What options are on the table? For instance, is keeping Russia out of the WTO on the table? Is that being looked at as a consequence? Secretary Edelman?

Mr. EDELMAN. Mr. Chairman, if I might, before going to answer that question I'd like to give a little more precision on DOD contacts with Georgians that paralleled what Secretary Fried described to you about his own efforts and those of his colleagues and Secretary Rice. I mentioned in my oral statement that Secretary Gates had met with and spoken to President Saakashvili in both the fall 2007 and the spring 2008. But we had other contacts as well. My colleague, Deputy Assistant Secretary Dan Fata, who is sitting behind me, traveled to Georgia in mid-April after the Bucharest Summit, when tensions were particularly high over Abkhazia. He returned at the tail end of June, and beginning of July, and his visits are part of an ongoing bilateral defense dialogue that we have with Georgia, and we have consistently urged Georgia to show restraint, to avoid provocations.

Those conversations continued. Secretary Gates, during the crisis weekend, was on the phone with his defense counterpart, but also with President Saakashvili, and I think we were sending a very consistent message.

Chairman LEVIN. What are the options you're looking at? For instance, I want to just start specifically, is keeping Russia out of the WTO an option being looked at?

Mr. EDELMAN. I think in general terms, Senator Levin, the major consequence to Russia is the isolation it has imposed on itself by taking these actions. You can see it in cases like the WTO, where for instance Georgia is a member and therefore, because the WTO operates by consensus, there's a natural break on that process.

We have traditionally been Russia's biggest supporter in the WTO. But I think it's things like that. It's questions like how the G-7 will continue, will the G-8 continue to operate in the future? Those are all things that are on the table now. But I defer to Secretary Fried because those are more in the diplomatic arena than in mine.

Chairman LEVIN. I want to go through a list of items as to what we are looking at in terms of consequences. Is keeping Russia out of the WTO one of those that you're looking at, Mr. Secretary? Just kind of quickly, yes, no, or maybe?

Mr. FRIED. We're looking at all of the range of options.

Chairman LEVIN. Does that include that?

Mr. FRIED. Nothing is off the table. We're looking at everything.

Chairman LEVIN. That's fine. Now, what about working with Russia in terms of pressuring Iran to stop their enrichment program? Are we thinking about not working with Russia in that area? It's a critical area in terms of the world's security to keep Iran from getting their enrichment program. Are we seriously

thinking about no longer trying to work with Russia to stop Iran from enriching uranium?

Mr. FRIED. We would like to be able to continue to work with Russia.

Chairman LEVIN. Are we saying to Russia, we may not continue to work with you?

Mr. FRIED. We have not sent that signal.

Chairman LEVIN. Is that on the table?

Mr. FRIED. There are areas where we have common interests with Russia. We had these common interests before August 8th and we have them now.

Chairman LEVIN. Those, therefore, are not on the table to be changed, is that fair? Look, these are important, complicated issues; I think it is important that we not send a signal, for instance, to Russia that we're no longer interested in working with her to stop Iran from getting nuclear weapons.

Mr. FRIED. Quite right. As I said, it remains in our interests to work with them. But we also want to look at the totality of the relationship, and to draw conclusions. But the point is—your point, sir, is an accurate one. Working with Russia on Iran remains in our national interest.

Chairman LEVIN. Hopefully then it is not on the table.

Mr. FRIED. As I said, it remains in our national—it certainly remains in our national interest.

Chairman LEVIN. To?

Mr. FRIED. To continue to work with them.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you. My time is up.

Senator Warner, obviously take whatever time you'd like in terms of your own opening statement, plus your 8 minutes.

Senator WARNER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll move along. We have a number of members here anxious to talk.

My first question to both Secretary Edelman and Secretary Fried, whoever is best qualified to answer it, at any time did the President indicate to the Secretary of Defense that we should put our military units on alert to engage actively in the repelling of the Russian forces and aiding Georgia?

Mr. EDELMAN. No, I do not believe that is the case, sir.

Senator WARNER. Do you agree with that, Secretary Fried? In other words, the use of force by the United States is not an option that was ever on the table then or now?

Mr. FRIED. I believe that to be the case. It was not.

Senator WARNER. Who knows? You believe, you believe. Who knows?

Mr. FRIED. To the best of my knowledge, this option was never discussed. I never heard it.

Mr. EDELMAN. Senator Warner, I don't believe we were ever contemplating the use of force.

Senator WARNER. Fine, thank you.

General PAXTON. That's correct, Mr. Senator. To the best of my knowledge, we never contemplated the use of force.

Senator WARNER. The statements that both of you made this morning, very good statements and pretty tough, used the verbiage we must support Georgia. I agree. Clearly, Russia overplayed its hands. It's still a question of who threw the first punch. But any-

way, what happened happened, and it did alter substantially the future relationships with Russia in the minds of not only the United States, but I think much of Europe.

We're where we are, and we're trying to, I think, learn from this as to how best to react should another similar situation take place. This morning in the New York Times, there was an article by Tom Shanker, who is recognized as a very responsible analyst in this area, and Steven Lee Myers. It's entitled as follows: "The Bush administration, after considerable internal debate—considerable internal debate"—has decided not to take direct punitive action against Russia for its conflict with Georgia, concluding it has little leverage if it acts unilaterally and that it would be better off pressing for a course of international criticism to be led by Europe.

"In recent interviews, senior administration officials said the White House had concluded that American punishment, like economic sanctions or blocking Russia from worldwide trade groups, would only backfire—it seems to me that is somewhat responsive to your question, Mr. Chairman—keep Russia's intransigence and allowing the Kremlin to narrow the regional and global implications of its invasion of Georgia to an old-fashioned Washington-Moscow dispute."

"Even as they vowed to work with allies, administration officials conceded that they wished the EU had been willing to take a firmer action than issuing tepid statements criticizing Russia's conduct. The officials said, the benefit of remaining part of a united front made it prudent for the United States to accept the softer approach advocated by Italy and Germany, among other allies."

Does that article comport with the testimony that you've given this morning? Secretary Edelman and then Secretary Fried, whoever wants to lead.

Mr. EDELMAN. Senator Warner, to go back to one of the questions that the chairman posed to us about the implications of this set of events in August for the alliance, for Europe, for Europe's energy security, I think that's really the administration's point of departure. It seems to me that in the first instance, as a strategic matter, one of the things that Russia is attempting to do in the aftermath of the decisions taken at Bucharest about Georgia and Ukraine and their relationship to NATO is to recur to an earlier, unfortunate pattern that we saw in the Cold War of trying to—

Senator WARNER. Just a minute, Mr. Secretary. Just a simple question, does this article—I assume you haven't read it yet?

Mr. EDELMAN. I haven't had a chance to read the article by Tom Shanker.

Senator WARNER. Well, I'm just trying to—

Mr. FRIED. It does not fully reflect administration policy.

Senator WARNER. So it's at variance with what you have stated this morning; is that correct?

Mr. FRIED. Yes.

Senator WARNER. That's what I wanted to know.

Mr. FRIED. Part of it is right, part of it is not right in my view.

Senator WARNER. What parts are not right in your judgment?

Mr. FRIED. It is not right that we consider the EU response tepid. It is not right that we think we have no leverage. It is right

that we want to work with Europe and we are far better off working with Europe than we are working on our own.

Mr. EDELMAN. Senator Warner, if I just might.

Senator WARNER. Yes.

Mr. EDELMAN. What I was driving at with my answer was that what Russia has tried to do in the wake of Bucharest is drive wedges between NATO and Georgia and Ukraine. It's tried by its threats to Poland and some of the Baltic States to drive wedges between the newer and older members of the alliance. It's tried to drive wedges between the U.S., NATO, and the EU, and it seems to me that our large strategic interest is to make sure that that does not happen.

Senator WARNER. That's true, but what I'm trying to focus on is the actual use of force, and what are the circumstances under which we might become involved such as our forces have to be employed in defending Georgia or other areas. For example, my own study of the situation indicates that these cultural deep divisions, ethnic divisions, which really precipitated this, go back a century. Does anyone disagree with that?

Therefore, as we proceed to try and advance the cause of democracy in various parts of the world, we have to be very conscious that a lot of these things are deep-rooted, deep-seated, and can start a flash fire which can burst on the scene into a major conflict.

That leads me to the question of the commitments, so to speak, to bring about admission of Georgia and the Ukraine into NATO. Now, everyone in the room probably knows this, but some may be following this hearing. Once in NATO, you have Article 5, which says an attack on one is an attack on all. Had Georgia been in NATO, I assume that Article 5 would have required NATO to join Georgia with the actual use of force in defending its sovereignty. Would that be correct?

Mr. FRIED. Yes.

Senator WARNER. Now, that brings me to a situation that concerns me deeply, as it does other members. We're now in a conflict, a NATO conflict, in Afghanistan. 26 nations of NATO, I think almost all, are in some way, sometimes minor, but involved in that conflict. 15 of those nations are permitting the use of their forces in that operation subject to what we call national caveats.

Those caveats vary, but essentially they're to protect their forces from being engaged in actual conflict with risk of life, loss of limb. The United States, Great Britain, Denmark, and Canada do not have those national caveats.

What concerns me is that this action in Georgia, this confrontation, brings to the forefront this issue of admission of new nations, the potential set of conflicts that they bring to the table, and consequently all members of NATO must recognize that they could be involved in an actual shooting war.

How are we going to address in the European theater, now as we look at the advancement of democracy, the admission of nations and the problems concerning these caveats? Speaking simply for myself, I do not want to see the American GI begin to take on another conflict where there are no restrictions whatsoever on the use of our forces, yet other nations that might be drawn into one of

these conflicts will assert these caveats and not perform the risk operations.

Secretary Edelman, how do you wish to address that issue? I point out the very courageous statement by the Secretary of Defense when he said the following: “Moreover, NATO is already at risk of becoming a two-tiered alliance of those who are willing to fight and those who are not.” Mr. Gates said in a speech at the Munich Conference on Security Policy in February 2008: “We must not—we cannot become a two-tiered alliance of those who are willing to fight and those who are not. Such a development, with all of its implications for collective security, would effectively destroy the alliance.”

Now we see a case in point, where I think, fortunately, Georgia is not a member of NATO, because had it been it would have required the invoking Article 5 and then we’re faced with another situation of possibly utilization of the national caveats.

How do we address that in the future?

Mr. EDELMAN. Well, Secretary Warner, you’ve raised, I think, two very important questions, both of which are matters of serious concern. The first is the question of caveats, to which we are opposed as a matter of principle. The caveats I think it’s fair to say have asserted themselves in NATO operations outside of what had been regarded as the traditional theater of operations, which was the alliance per se, that is to say in the various stability and peace-keeping operations that NATO’s been involved in in the Balkans and now in Afghanistan.

We’re opposed to caveats and I quite agree that it would be impossible—it would have been impossible for the alliance during the years of the Cold War to have operated with caveats and to have defended Europe. You just can’t be prepared to defend Europe if some people are only willing to fight in some parts of the theater or on certain days of the week or whatever the caveat is.

So I quite agree, we have made caveats a big issue. You’ve cited Secretary Gates’s Verkunda speech. It was a subject of discussion at both Riga and at the Bucharest summits, and we have made some progress, but not enough, on eliminating caveats. For instance, I think under the new government in Italy a number of the caveats in Afghanistan have been lifted. So I think we’ve made some progress there.

But it’s not possible to have an Article 5 guarantee if there are caveats on national forces in place. I think that’s absolutely correct. We will need, I think, now unfortunately to address the issue of making sure the Article 5 guarantee is clear and understood and credible. I believe it is a credible guarantee to those who are currently members of the alliance. I think it’s arguable that had Georgia been a member of the alliance perhaps Russia would have acted differently in the light of the Article 5 guarantee. That’s a hypothetical. We don’t know.

But I think it’s absolutely crucial that all members of the alliance understand the responsibilities that Article 5 imposes. We have heretofore, since NATO began to enlarge in the 1990s, operated in an environment where the presumption was that NATO was a partner—Russia was a partner for NATO, not an adversary. Unfortunately, Russia’s behavior in the last month has now called

that into question and that's going to have to be reassessed. I believe that that's an issue which the defense ministers when they meet next week in London, and certainly we'll be discussing Georgia, will be addressing, as well as in their regular defense ministerial a month later in Budapest. I suspect the foreign ministers when they meet in December will have to address that question as well.

So it's something that we have to now take on as an alliance to make sure that we have in place what we need in order to make Article 5 a credible guarantee.

Chairman LEVIN. Secretary Fried, if you could briefly comment, and then we'll move to Senator Lieberman.

Mr. FRIED. In addition to my colleague's points, I'd like to address Senator Warner's question about NATO enlargement and issues of local conflicts, ethnic conflicts. NATO enlargement has proven to be a strikingly effective mechanism for resolving disputes between nations and we saw in the process of NATO's enlargement to Central Europe and Eastern Europe in the 1990s that disputes that had plagued these countries in the past tended to vanish or become greatly attenuated as part of the NATO enlargement process. So as a result of NATO enlargement, we saw a Europe whole, free, and at peace coming into being, instead of a return to national conflicts.

That said, we have to be careful as NATO continues to look at enlargement eastward. NATO membership for Georgia and Ukraine is not on the immediate agenda. What is on the immediate agenda is a so-called MAP, which is not an offer of membership, it is not a promise of membership. Rather, it is a program under which countries can prepare and get themselves ready for membership, a process which usually takes a number of years.

Senator WARNER. I think we have to thank you very much.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Warner.

Senator Lieberman.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

Thanks, Secretary Edelman, Secretary Fried, and Generals. Perhaps I should begin this way. The world changed on August 8, 2008. That's not my statement, though I fear there may be some truth to it. That's a statement, roughly paraphrased, made by President Medvedev of Russia, and echoed in various terms by Prime Minister Putin. It tells us the challenge that we face now from a resurgent Russia based on the words of its leaders.

Of course, this is profoundly disappointing, because I think it is fair to say that since the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union the policy of the United States and of our allies in Europe has been to engage Russia in a constructive partnership, even hoping for the day when it would be an alliance.

I want to pick up, Secretary Fried, on what you said about NATO. It seems to me that NATO was created with two great purposes in the 1940s. One was the obvious one of uniting the Nations of Western Europe to be prepared militarily to resist a Soviet movement on the ground into Western Europe.

But the second—and this was of course pre-EU. The second was to create an institutional framework in which the national rivalries within Europe, which had resulted in centuries of war, could be re-

solved. In fact, that has been an effect of NATO. I'd say without NATO there never would have been an EU, struggling as it may be to come into its full existence. As you said, Secretary Fried, that's been true with other internal minor ethnic conflicts, not so minor in some cases, in Central and Eastern Europe.

I can remember times at the aforementioned Verkunda Atlantic Alliance Conference in Munich when a number of people said quite rationally that we might look forward to the day when Russia would become part of NATO if it met the requirements of democratic government and the rest. But the Russians have chosen a different course and it's a fateful decision, and I think it's one that we have to take as seriously as your statements this morning and the administration, NATO, and the EU have taken it.

I appreciate the statements you've made. I think they reflect an administration policy that in my opinion has been principled, realistic, clear, direct, and appropriately measured, because we're trying very hard to do as much as we can in response multilaterally.

It also seems to me that, though I know, as you testified, Secretary Fried, that we urged the Georgians not to take military action in either of the disputed provinces, you also—and I appreciate it—testified this morning that the Russians were provoking the Georgians. Their movement into South Ossetia was not an unprovoked action and the Russian response, as you, Secretary Edelman and Secretary Fried, have said, was also greatly disproportionate.

So the question is what are we going to do now in a way that's sensible, that's practical, that's realistic, and that leaves no doubt in the mind of our allies in Eastern Europe particularly and the Russians that we're not going to go back to a sphere of influence foreign policy in Europe. Our policy is to let every nation determine its own destiny.

Three weeks ago today actually, Senator Lindsey Graham and I went to Kiev and Ukraine, then on Wednesday to Georgia, and then Thursday to Warsaw. I want to state that the reaction of the leaders of the governments of Ukraine and Poland are intense. They have lived under Soviet domination. They are fearful of what the Russian movement into Georgia portends for them, and have real anxiety. Of course, Poland is already a member of NATO, so the consequences of that are quite serious.

I want to ask a couple of questions, if I may. The first is on the question of military assistance to Georgia. They're not asking for our troops as I hear them. They're asking primarily, as they told Senator Graham and me, for anti-aircraft weapons and anti-tank weapons. They're not in a fantasy world. They know if the Russian army wants to move over Georgia they're not going to be able to stop them. But they think if we give them that, or NATO helps give them that, it will, one, be a statement of our support, the most tangible statement of our support for their sovereignty; and two, that they may be able to at least delay or raise the costs of further Russian movement into Georgia.

I take it from what's been said today that we're sending out an assessment team and we're prepared to consider, hopefully along with our NATO Allies, giving the Georgians some military assistance that goes beyond the counterterrorism assistance that we've

given them so far. Which is not much help in a fight with Russia. Secretary Edelman?

Mr. EDELMAN. Senator, first of all, thank you for your remarks. I agree with the tenor of everything you said and it seems to me that both Secretary Fried and I today have expressed a desire on the part of the United States that this not be necessarily a final statement of Russia's direction, that Russia still has opportunity to recalculate the value to its national interest of what it's done and what it might do in a different way.

With regard to the question of military assistance to Georgia, we support Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity and one of the primary attributes of sovereignty is the ability to defend yourself. So there should not be any question about whether Georgia is entitled to military assistance from the United States or indeed from NATO or any of the NATO Allies.

We do have an assessment team that is in place now. They're looking at various aspects of this, trying to assess first the damage to the Georgian military forces, understand what has been lost in terms of equipment and facilities, and get some sense of the scope of what it would take to just rebuild that capability. We have a NATO assessment team that'll be going in shortly as well.

I do think we want to do this in a very measured and calibrated way. It requires first understanding the situation in terms of capability that exists, capability that might need to be built, and reaching some understanding with Georgia about what capabilities it thinks it needs and how they might be employed.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thank you.

Secretary Fried, let me ask you this question. When Senator Graham and I were in Kiev and we met with President Yushchenko, he quite explicitly expressed fear that the Russians were beginning to follow a pattern in Crimea that was quite similar to the pattern that had been followed in South Ossetia and Abkhazia, where there are Russians there who are citizens of the Ukraine, they're not Russian citizens, but the Russians according to President Yushchenko have already issued 70,000 Russian passports to Russian Ukrainians living in Crimea. Of course, this is a historically strategically important section with access to the Black Sea.

Are you fearful that Russia, certainly if we don't respond in a strong and united way to what they've done in Georgia, may follow a similar course in Crimea? That's certainly President Yushchenko's fear.

Mr. FRIED. We are indeed concerned by the implications of President Medvedev's assertion of a sphere of influence in general and in particular his assertion that Russia has the right or certain rights with respect to Russian citizens living abroad. When you combine that with the fact that Russia can create these citizens by the act of handing out Russian passports, it has of course raised concerns in our own minds as well as in Ukraine's.

Ukrainian territorial integrity should not be questioned. Tomorrow I am going to Kiev for discussions following up on the Vice President's discussions there. But there is no doubt that Ukrainians are concerned and, unfortunately, there is some basis. A strong response by Europe and the United States to Russia's attack

on Georgia is important, not just for Georgia's sake, but for the sake of other countries that may feel themselves under great pressure.

Senator LIEBERMAN. I thank all four of you very much for your strong leadership.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Lieberman.

Senator Martinez.

Senator MARTINEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good morning, gentlemen, and thank you all for your testimony and for your service.

It seems to me that the consequences of Russia's actions are broader than even just the area of immediate influence. I have watched an area of the world that I closely watch, which is Latin America, and this morning there are news reports of Russia now engaging in naval exercises with Venezuela, which when added to the commentary of a month or so ago that they might be placing strategic bombers in Cuba raises questions about a tit-for-tat type of spheres of influence sort of response, along with many of the statements made by President Medvedev as well as Prime Minister Putin raise concerns about a reassertion of a Russian empire.

So the question about whether or not Russia was provoked into this action or we gave mixed signals to Georgia, I resolve those fairly easily in my mind. When I visited Georgia and was in South Ossetia 2 years ago, it was very clear then that Russia was treating that area as part of Russian territory. When you drive into Tskhinvali and the first thing you see is an enormous billboard of Vladimir Putin, it gives you a hint of how they view the situation there.

So my question then has to do with Ukraine and how we view a potential membership of Ukraine and Georgia into NATO.

I know that there was a lot of discussion of this in recent months and it didn't occur, and perhaps not occurring, not having happened, was further impetus for Russia to take the very aggressive action that they took in Georgia and might be an added invitation for them to look at Ukraine.

So what do we do to prevent a similar set of circumstances occurring in Ukraine to what occurred in Georgia, since the patterns seem terribly similar and Russia's intentions seem rather clear? Secretary Fried?

Mr. FRIED. We believe that the emerging democracies in all of Europe have a right to choose for themselves the institutions to which they want to belong, and that applies to Georgia and Ukraine. As I said earlier, an actual invitation to join NATO is not on the immediate agenda. But what is on the agenda and what was discussed prior to the Bucharest NATO Summit is an invitation for the so-called MAP, which is a program to let these countries do the hard work that they have to do to qualify for NATO membership.

It is our belief that the qualifications of these countries to join the alliance ought to be a function of their own reforms, their own readiness, and the alliance's own decisions about whether their admission would advance European security.

Senator MARTINEZ. Excuse me, Mr. Secretary, but the issue of a few months ago, candidly, was not their readiness. We admitted

several, did not admit these two because of Russia's heated objections. Frankly, I think the weakness that NATO showed in not admitting these two perhaps may have been a part of the calculations that Russia made in taking the aggressive action that they took.

I understand about the process of preparing yourself for admission. That doesn't seem to me to be what the issue really is with the Ukraine and Georgia. It was more about NATO's willingness to have an Article 5 relationship with these two nations. Is that not correct?

Mr. FRIED. We strongly believe that there should be no new line in Europe and that Russia should not be allowed to assert that there is a line and that nations on the eastern side of this line have no right to determine their own future. We believe very strongly in this and so does NATO as a whole. At Bucharest NATO made the decision in the communique that Georgia and Ukraine will become members of the alliance. That was a signal that NATO will not recognize a Russian sphere of influence. This decision was important. It was not made casually. It was not made by lower level people stuffing language into a communique. This decision was made by the leaders themselves. That's an important decision and we need to stand by it, I quite agree with you.

Senator MARTINEZ. Two other quick things in the time I have remaining. One, I wanted to ask about whether membership, continued membership in the G-8, or other similar tangible steps should be taken, or is the United States urging that they be taken? The chairman asked about a range of options, were they on the table or not. Are we pushing for some tangible steps that will exact a price beyond this perceived isolation, which I frankly am not real sure that I see?

Is there going to be a cost to Russia for their naked aggression, for their brutal aggression, and for their threat of equally brutal aggression for their neighbors? What is the U.S.'s response?

Mr. FRIED. Senator, I think Russia has already incurred a substantial cost. I think they have been isolated. I think that the condemnation by the EU, by NATO, by the foreign ministers of the G-7 countries, by individual leaders, has been strong and swift. Russia's isolation can be judged by the fact that so far only Nicaragua has recognized South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

At the moment, our emphasis is on getting the Russian troops out of Georgia, working with the French and the EU to get Russia to honor the ceasefire that President Medvedev has signed. We will work carefully and systematically through the questions that you and the chairman raised. Those are fair questions and fair points. First let's get the Russian troops out, let's help Georgia recover, stabilize itself, and let's think through very carefully the consequences for our relations with Russia working with Europe.

Senator MARTINEZ. To that point, General Paxton, I would like to know two things, if you would, on the military end. One is the issue of cyber warfare. We understand that Russia employed some sort of cyber techniques as part of their invasion of Georgia. Second, the current status of Russia's withdrawal and where are they actually today?

General PAXTON. Thank you, Mr. Senator. If I may, sir, I'd like to address the second one, which is the status of the Russian force

laydown, and then my colleague General Flynn will discuss the cyber side, sir.

On the force laydown, we did monitor the existence of the tripartite peacekeeping force that was in South Ossetia and we watched the buildup of forces through the Roki Tunnel during the first ensuing days, particularly the first 2 or 3 days, and then we knew about when they peaked, and we're tracking now to ensure that, when you look at Sarkozy's six-point plan, we're trying to ensure that they get down below pre-hostility levels.

So we do track the force levels of the Russian battalions and other units, not only in South Ossetia, but in Abkhazia, sir.

Senator MARTINEZ. This may be the only time in the history of the world the aggressor force also gets to be the peacekeeper. But anyway, on the cyber issue. My time has expired, so if you can quickly just answer on that point.

General FLYNN. Very briefly, the issue of cyber attacks—cyber efforts. We know that there were some conducted. What is unclear is if they were state-sponsored, being Russian-sponsored by the government.

Senator MARTINEZ. What's not clear or was clear?

General FLYNN. It remains unclear.

Senator MARTINEZ. It remains unclear.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Martinez.

Just a quick comment and then I'm calling on Senator Nelson.

You said, Secretary Fried, a minute ago that there's been no promise of NATO membership to these two countries. The Bucharest Summit said: "We agreed today that these countries will become members of NATO." I'm going to leave it at that because I don't want to take time out of my turn. But it seems to me it's a direct conflict.

Senator Nelson.

Senator BEN NELSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, gentlemen. We're assuming that Russia cares about the public relations. I heard Secretary Edelman talk very close to something about redemption. Secretary Fried said something close to they've already paid the costs. We're assuming that they care, that this is important to them as to how they're viewed in the rest of the world.

Russia doesn't have to join NATO to have influence in Europe. They have it already. It's called energy diplomacy. With the reliance of Western Europe in Russia's natural gas, Russia already can do whatever it chooses to do as long as it has those strings that it can pull. There are constant reports about their willingness or their ability to do that. It's been suggested that they've already engaged in some energy diplomacy with the Ukraine. If you control 40 percent or more of the natural gas in Western Europe, NATO becomes somewhat irrelevant, particularly if it's in danger of becoming a two-tier system. Why would you want to belong to that organization when you already have the influence you have and a growing influence?

I visited the offices of Gazprom. I've seen their pipeline charts and their projected pipeline charts. As I recall, I saw a projected pipeline into North America.

Let me ask this. Would you think that it's quite possible that the situation has been altered, as the chairman suggested, and that, I think as Senator Lieberman suggested as well, that they have now charted a different course? Is that a possibility, that we're trying to use a paradigm that may not apply to the way they're thinking? If that's the case, we're going to only frustrate ourselves and not be successful in achieving any kind of diplomacy with the rest of Europe.

Either way.

Mr. EDELMAN. Senator Nelson, I guess I would say that we don't definitively know the answer, dispositively know the answer yet.

Senator BEN NELSON. Well, but is that a possibility, that this is where it's heading?

Mr. EDELMAN. Yes, it is a possibility, and I think I alluded to that in my opening statement, that this may very well be the direction that they are headed in. We hope not and we want to make it clear that it doesn't have to be this way, that the choice is up to Russia how it wants to conduct itself with regard not only to the NATO Allies, but its neighbors, and whether it wants to abide by the norms and the values of the institutions that it has said over the last 15, 16 years that it aspires to join.

That's been the basis for the policy of three American administrations, that we ought to take them at their word, try to integrate them into these institutions.

Senator BEN NELSON. Excuse me, but you know the former republics don't take them at their word. I'm not sure I understand why we're anxious to do that.

Mr. EDELMAN. I think it's not a question of anxious. I think it's the policy that has been, as I said, undergirding three different presidential administrations. I think before we discard it we need to test the proposition and find out what direction Russia is really going in.

I very much agree with your comments about the importance of energy and energy security. This is an issue that has precipitated discussion among the defense ministers of NATO back in the time when the gas cutoff to Ukraine took place. I think the attacks in Georgia this month highlight the importance of Georgia as an energy transit country so that we can maintain diversity of supply for both gas and oil, in addition to the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline.

The issue of Europe's energy dependence on Russia unfortunately is an old one. It goes back more than 20 years. The United States I think under administrations—

Senator BEN NELSON. It's even more significant today than it was then.

Mr. EDELMAN. It's more significant than it was then, but the point I was trying to make is that we've had a number of presidential administrations of both parties that have had the same view, I think, which is that Europe must have diversity of energy alternatives in terms of sources and transport.

Senator BEN NELSON. Certainly the Ukraine is. They came and talked to me about ethanol.

In trying to understand what's going on and project for the future, I think it becomes very important, as you're indicating, that

we look at their actions as well as their words and try to understand what's going on and not take them simply at their word.

Secretary Fried, you said that Poland seemed to be motivated to move more quickly on the missile defense agreement as a result of the action in Georgia by Russia. Do you have any thoughts about what Russia's motives may have been and whether they had assumed that Poland would back off or that the Czech Republic would back off or Azerbaijan would be less friendly toward the United States? Do we have any thoughts about that?

Mr. FRIED. I can't speak definitively to Russian motives or Russian thinking. But if that is what they thought, then they were badly mistaken. Countries such as Ukraine and Azerbaijan and NATO Allies such as Poland and the Baltic States have reacted vigorously against Russia's attack on Georgia. They have led in Europe for a strong European response.

The Vice President's trip to Azerbaijan and Ukraine shows that these countries are looking to the United States for leadership. They welcome our support. Far from being intimidated by the Russians, they are determined, it seems, to safeguard their own sovereignty, which has been so hard to regain.

By the way, I also, sir, agree with your point about energy. It has been the policy of this administration and the previous one to support efforts to diversify sources and routes for energy to avoid Russian monopolies.

Senator BEN NELSON. One final question. You mentioned that you're coming forward with a proposal for about a half a billion for economic recovery efforts in Georgia. Have any of the other aligned countries, whether NATO or the EU, have they stepped forward? I know President Sarkozy has shown an interest and talked directly to the Russian officials. Have they put up or offered to put up any money as well?

Mr. FRIED. Not to the extent we have.

Senator BEN NELSON. To what extent, then?

Mr. FRIED. Smaller amounts of assistance, mainly humanitarian.

Senator BEN NELSON. How small?

Mr. FRIED. Tens of millions of dollars from various countries. I can provide this in detail.

Senator BEN NELSON. I would like to see it.

[The information referred to follows:]

Not yet to the extent we have, but our pledge of \$1 billion has stimulated the European Commission to start developing a large package of assistance. So far, after the United States, the three biggest contributors to support for Georgia are members of the European Union (EU) or North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO): Norway has pledged \$36 million; Sweden \$20 million; and Germany \$15 million. Each country is contributing in different ways, but in total, EU and NATO countries have provided or pledged more than \$109 million in bilateral assistance; \$14.1 million through U.N. programs and \$95 million in material (blankets, tents, food, medical equipment, and other necessities) or other forms of direct cash assistance (through nongovernmental organizations and international organizations). Again, we expect that assistance from the EU will be much larger than the sums so far pledged.

Mr. FRIED. Mainly humanitarian. The EU is preparing to do more and they're talking about an international conference to support Georgia. We've made the decision to move out first, early, set a standard, but also help the Georgian economy stabilize itself. So we moved out promptly and we hope that Europe follows quickly.

Senator BEN NELSON. We hope that they follow with their coins as well as their words, because that's going to really dictate what this future looks like for Georgia and for the Caucasus.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Nelson.

Senator Thune is next, to be followed by Senator Webb. Senator Webb is able to stay on beyond his own time. Thank you for being able to do that because I'll be necessarily absent for about half an hour. Then he can call on Senators after he's done himself.

Senator Thune.

Senator THUNE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to thank Secretaries Edelman and Fried and also General Paxton and General Flynn for being with us today and for your service to our country.

Secretary Edelman, I understand that with Russia's recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia as independent states 2 weeks ago there were very few, if any, other countries that have followed suit and officially recognized the independence of these two states. In fact, my understanding is aside from Nicaragua there isn't any other country that's officially recognized the independence of those two countries.

By way of comparison, Kosovo's independence last February was recognized by 46 countries, with 17 countries recognizing their independence within the first week after Kosovo declared it. All of the G-7 nations have recognized Kosovo's independence.

In your estimation—and I pose this to both Secretary Edelman and Secretary Fried. In your estimation, what does that comparison say about the notion that Russia's invasion of Georgia marked an end to the post-Cold War world or that a major shift in the distribution of power has occurred?

Mr. EDELMAN. Senator Thune, I think what it speaks to most is the weakness of the Russian argument that its actions in Georgia and its recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia as independent states are somehow following on the Kosovo precedent. Kosovo was in some sense *sui generis* because it was an action that came at the tail end of a decade of upheaval that led to 250,000 deaths and millions of people being displaced, a number of U.N. Security Council resolutions, and Kosovo's status was regulated under Security Council Resolution 1244.

None of those circumstances, obviously, apply in this instance. So I think, notwithstanding the hyperbolic and inflated rhetoric that has emanated from some in Russia about their actions being in response to "genocide," I think in the international community as a whole there is recognition that there is really no substance to that comparison. I think the factors or the facts that you've quoted about who recognized what I think speak to that.

Not only has Nicaragua been the only country I'm aware of that has recognized this, but, as my colleague testified, the SCO refused to endorse it. The Collective Security Treaty Organization, which is made up of the states of the former Soviet Union, did not endorse it. So I think, that to me speaks volumes about the weakness of this so-called precedent.

Senator THUNE. Do you have anything to add?

Mr. FRIED. I agree with my colleague's point. I would simply add that it also speaks to Russia's diplomatic isolation on this question.

Senator THUNE. The other question I had for either or both of you has to do with Russian military and diplomatic officials making some very serious threats against our NATO Allies Poland and the Czech Republic regarding the missile defense sites that we have reached agreement to build in these countries. Last month, after Poland agreed to host 10 missile interceptors to defend against a potential strike by Iran, the Russian deputy chief of staff said that Poland would be open to a military strike and possibly even a nuclear strike.

Earlier this year when we reached agreement with the Czech Republic to house a missile defense radar there, the Russian foreign minister published a written statement that said: "If the real deployment of a U.S. strategic missile defense system begins near our borders, then we will have to respond using not diplomatic but military technological methods."

Given this pattern of reckless behavior on the part of Russia, do you view these statements as simply rhetoric, more hyperbolic rhetoric, or something that we should be taking at face value? In other words, the question I would have is how seriously should we be taking these threats?

Mr. EDELMAN. Well, I think both are true. I think the rhetoric is pretty hyperbolic, but I think we have to take the threats with the gravest seriousness. These threats I think are baseless and they come in the face of a very concerted effort that both Secretary Fried and I have been involved in to assuage Russian concerns about the interceptor sites. Russia failed to mention in most of these discussions that they themselves already have nuclear-tipped missile defense interceptors arrayed around Moscow. Our interceptors not only are not nuclear-tipped, they have no explosive warhead. They are purely kinetic kill vehicles. The notion that 10 of them in Poland, clearly aimed at deterring an Iranian missile threat that is developing, and in order to protect our Allies, just as the missile defense system that we are deploying at Fort Greeley and Vandenberg Air Force Base will ultimately defend the United States against those threats, seems to me to be consistent with what the United States has practiced throughout the postwar, post-World War II period—making sure that the defense of Europe and the United States is coupled.

The idea that these are a threat to Russia and that they should call for threats of retaliation, much less nuclear retaliation, on the countries hosting them seems to me to be totally out of keeping with the precepts that we have been operating on with Russia since the end of the Cold War.

Senator THUNE. Secretary Fried, there are recent press reports that indicate Russia is planning to use its position in negotiations with Iran as a bargaining chip against the United States. How would you assess Russia's cooperation on the subject of Iran in the past and have they been much of a help? Doesn't a nuclear-armed Iran pose a threat to Russia as well? Just comment generally, if you would, on some of those questions.

Mr. FRIED. Russia has been a constructive partner in the P5 plus 1 process with respect to Iran's nuclear program. We have worked

closely with Russia. The so-called incentives offer that we made, that the P5 plus 1 has made to Iran, came about through, among other things, work with the Russians.

It certainly seems to be in Russia's interest to work with us because a nuclear-armed Iran would be a threat to them. I have also heard what you have, sir, that the Russians intend somehow, or have talked loosely about trying to use their cooperation on Iran as leverage. I don't see how they would, and in any event we are going to try to work with the Russians in areas where we have common interests, but I cannot imagine circumstances in which we would bargain away the rights of sovereign countries for the privilege of working with the Russians in areas of common interest.

Senator THUNE. There's a report that Russia's going to soon deliver or may have begun delivering new, much more sophisticated anti-aircraft systems to Iran. In fact, there was an ABC News report on July 9 stating that Iran is expected to take delivery of the SA-20 missile shield system from Russia by the end of the year, which I think is contrary to remarks made today by Secretary of Defense Robert Gates. That's actually a quote from July 9.

I guess—and maybe this is a question for our military members of the panel, for General Flynn today, too. But is the assessment of Russia's delivery of these systems to Iran something that we ought to be concerned about? How long will it be until these systems are up and running? If delivered, what does the capability of the systems mean to the military balance of power in the region?

General PAXTON. Senator Thune, with your permission let me just give a preliminary answer and then I think General Flynn will be happy to talk about some of the details.

Unfortunately, Russia has provided a lot of conventional military support to Iran. In general, I don't think that has been as helpful as some of their diplomatic efforts have been. The missiles you point to and the reports you point to in particular are something we watch very carefully because it is a very serious capability that would be a concern to us, as well as others in the region, and we do watch it very closely.

To the best of my knowledge, I don't believe that the missiles that were referred to in the ABC report are in fact slated for delivery by the end of this year. But it is something that we are watching very closely.

Senator THUNE. General?

General FLYNN. I would just add that I would agree with the time line. We don't see it by the end of this year. The significance of that type of weapons system put into Iran would certainly change some of their capabilities and it's something that we would be clearly concerned about.

I would just add that in order for Iran to acquire that kind of a weapons system they have to go through a whole series of training and understanding how to apply it, et cetera. So there's a number of issues that we would be monitoring and working very closely with our Allies to ensure that we understand the time line if in fact they decide to deliver that weapons system into Iran.

Senator THUNE. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator WEBB [presiding]. Thank you, Senator Thune.

As it turns out, I am next. I would like to begin, as is so often the case, by stating that I'm in strong agreement with the senior Senator from Virginia in the approach that he took to his questioning and the concerns that he raised. The question from I think both of our perspectives is not so much philosophical alignment or diplomatic agreement. It is the circumstances under which the United States must feel compelled to respond militarily in these sorts of situations.

This is a region, as you all know, whose history is scarred by these sorts of entanglements. If you go back to World War I, World War I started because Austria gave an ultimatum to Serbia, and because Austria was involved Germany got involved, because Serbia was involved Russia got involved, and because Russia got involved France got involved, and because France got involved England got involved.

We need to be very careful in sorting out what is an alliance and what is not. If you look at the movement in NATO, the new movement in NATO, I think if we were to apply historical terms we have been bringing in a series of protectorates in traditional terms rather than allies. You would define an ally as a nation that actually bolsters your security or your collective security by joining. A lot of these countries, it's hard to imagine their meeting that standard.

As Senator Warner said, if Georgia had been a NATO member when this incident occurred, despite the tempestuous nature of the leadership in Georgia that was something of lighting a fuse on it, we would have had a different set of responsibilities to be looking at as a country.

Secretary Edelman, you were I think very careful in your comments to use the word "disproportionate response" when you talk about the Russian actions. Would you say that there was a response that would have been appropriate? What would have been Russia's limits of disproportionality on Russia's response?

Mr. EDELMAN. Senator Webb, as Senator Lieberman pointed out in his questioning, there's no question that Russia has been provoking Georgia for some time. Because there was some uncertainty, as there always is when you have these kinds of periods of tension and conflict in a place as remote as the Caucasus, I think we've used the word "disproportionate" because if you accept it, the premise that Russia had, which is that it was protecting its 500 peacekeepers in South Ossetia and that it was trying to stop the attacks, the artillery strikes on Tskhinvali, there would have been no need to go beyond the administrative borders of South Ossetia, to take up positions along the M1-M27 highway, which is the east-west lifeline of Georgia, to take military actions that might at least arguably suggest an attack on the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline, and to systematically go after every element of Georgian military—

Senator WEBB. So basically you're talking about the proportionate nature of the response when you go into that detail?

Mr. EDELMAN. Correct.

Senator WEBB. I haven't had access to classified material, but I have read that 10 Russian soldiers were killed in the initial action by Georgia. Is that correct?

Mr. EDELMAN. I'd have to defer to General Flynn for the actual casualty numbers. I'm not sure we actually know the numbers yet because there's still some confusion.

General FLYNN. The initial contact, which we believe was between some police elements in South Ossetia and some Georgian military forces, the outcome of that is still to be assessed. The numbers range from a small number such as 10, and I've seen reports upwards as high as 200 in the initial couple of hours of contact.

Senator WEBB. Well, these are the kind of situations I think that give a lot of people pause when we talk about expanding NATO in the way that we've been expanding it.;

General Paxton, we received a reprogramming request yesterday from DOD on the Armed Services Committee here to transfer \$30 million from the 2008 operation and maintenance (O&M) funds account to the overseas humanitarian disaster and civic aid account in order to provide humanitarian relief to Georgia. Are you aware of that?

General PAXTON. Only in the general terms, Mr. Senator, that we are considering that. I'm not sure what that is specifically tied to, though, no, sir.

Senator WEBB. So you're not aware of the \$30 million transfer that's being proposed?

General PAXTON. Well, I defer to—

Senator WEBB. Are any of you gentlemen aware of it?

Mr. EDELMAN. I'm aware of it, Senator Webb. I think it's because the Overseas Humanitarian Disaster and Civic Aid account had been run down by a variety of other humanitarian contingencies and we wanted to make sure we had sufficient funding to continue the humanitarian efforts.

Senator WEBB. Do you know where that would be coming out of in terms of the O&M accounts?

Mr. EDELMAN. Specifically where the comptroller would be reprogramming money from, I'm not aware of that, Senator. But we can get you an answer for the record.

[The information referred to follows:]

The \$30 million being reprogrammed from operation and maintenance to the Overseas Humanitarian Disaster and Civic Aid (OHDACA) account was taken from global train and equip funds. Congressional actions in the fiscal year 2008 supplemental resulted in an additional \$150 million being added to the \$300 million global train and equip account. The Department of Defense has no plans to execute global train and equip projects beyond the \$300 million already authorized in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008.

The reprogramming effort was required because DOD responses to 10 disasters, including the Georgia response, depleted the \$40 million OHDACA account. The reprogramming action replenishes the OHDACA account for fiscal years 2008–2010 disaster requirements.

Senator WEBB. All right, I'd appreciate that.

Senator BAYH. Thank you.

Gentlemen, thank you for your service.

I'm reminded of a couple of things here this morning, one in the distant past. I think there's a passage from the History of the Peloponnesian War, which I was required to read as a young man, and I think it's called "The Melian Dialogue," in which the Athenian general announces to the citizens of the island of Melos, who

were interested in negotiating with him, that in his point of view “The strong do as they will; the weak suffer what they must.”

Here we are this morning. I update that to a conference in Prague a few years ago I was privileged to attend on the subject of U.S.-Russian relations. A prominent figure in the Russian government gave us a presentation and, frankly, I found it to be rather breathtaking. He basically said: We’ve concluded we don’t need you. Where we have interests in common, as both of our secretaries this morning have outlined, we’ll work together with you, and he mentioned preventing the spread of nuclear weapons. I don’t think he mentioned Iran, but I think that’s on the list. There may be a couple of others.

But he said: Other than that, we just don’t—we have other interests, you’re not that relevant to us, and we’re going to go on our way. Here we have it again this morning.

So I would like to follow up, Secretary Fried, on something I think you mentioned. It seems to me that these individuals leading Russia right now, they care about power, they care about wealth, they care about military capability, they care about territory, the acquisition and the occupation thereof. I mean, these are hard-nosed, bottom line kind of individuals.

When we say that they have “paid a substantial cost,” I really wonder if they look at it that way. Perhaps in diplomatic circles people may look at it that way. They’ve been condemned. They’ve been diplomatically isolated. Do they really care about that kind of thing? They don’t strike me as individuals who care that deeply about that kind of thing?

There are reports now floating out there that they may be sending nuclear experts to Iran or they may be welcoming Iranian nuclear scientists to Moscow. I assume that’s just sort of to tweak our nose a little bit. But in any event, these are the kind of individuals that we’re dealing with.

So when we have interests in common, we will work with them. When our interests diverge, we need allies and we need leverage. Our allies are somewhat weakened because of their dependency on Russian oil and gas. We need to focus on reducing that. We need to reduce our own dependency on imports of energy.

But my question simply to the two secretaries is this: Where is our leverage? What kind of leverage do we have that they care about? It strikes me that simply verbal condemnation and diplomatic isolation may not be enough to get the job done. So what is our leverage, and if we don’t have enough how do we get some?

Mr. FRIED. Senator, what you heard in the conference in Prague is typical of a certain strain of Russian official thinking. I’ve heard it, too. You gave a quite accurate account.

I don’t think Russia is 10 feet tall and, although their bank accounts are full of money earned by exporting oil and natural gas, Russia has substantial weaknesses. I think they’re mistaken, the Russian leaders are mistaken, if they think they can, like the Soviet Union, live and prosper in their own world apart from the west. Their demographic situation is terrible and not going to improve soon, demographics being a very unforgiving science. Their economy is unbalanced, with their exports highly dependent on

natural resources. That is, it is a value extracted more than a value added economy, in contrast to, say, China.

Russia will require capital investment and a sustained period of cooperation with the world for its economy to grow for some time to come.

Senator BAYH. Now you're on to something here. Are you suggesting that the recent adverse reaction in the markets and possibly adverse impacts on future investment in Russia will have a restraining effect on them? Where is the leverage, Mr. Secretary?

Mr. FRIED. Businesses have always been concerned about problems of the rule of law in Russia. The events in Georgia may tend to underscore these concerns. You're quite right that a couple of communiques that use the word "condemn" by themselves, if this is all there is, does not constitute a lasting lesson.

But it is a pretty good beginning, and Russia is not as well placed to prosper in isolation than was the Soviet Union. The population is half the size, they don't have a bloc of countries, of European countries, as enforced allies. Russia is ill placed to have a hostile relationship with the world.

It is true that there is a lot of triumphalism in the official Russian media. But over time I think cooler heads may prevail.

Those are good questions, Senator, and we are going to have to look at this in a systematic and thoughtful way in the months ahead. Our priorities now are to help Georgia, work with Russia's neighbors. But the questions you raise and that others have raised are good ones and these are the ones we're working with. I'm just trying to outline some of the parameters in our underlying thinking.

Senator BAYH. Secretary Edelman, I'm interested in your thoughts as well.

Secretary Fried, I would just comment or ask, and perhaps one of the two of you can follow up. The reaction of the markets was good. I've seen what's happened with the Russian stock market and the reduction in commodities prices which has taken place for other reasons may face them with some difficult financial decisions, reminding them that they don't, even with the wealth they have, they don't live in isolation.

But is there anything that we as a government can do to follow up on the action of the marketplace to sort of drive that home, to give us some more leverage? That's just a question I would have. Secretary Edelman, do you have any—

Mr. EDELMAN. I was just going to say I agree—

Senator BAYH. It sounds as if you read the Melian Dialogue at some point, too. You were nodding your head.

Mr. EDELMAN. I had a misspent youth as a history graduate student, Senator Bayh, and one of my teachers was Donald Kagan at Yale University. So I spent a lot of time reading the Melian Dialogue with Professor Kagan.

I think I was actually going to pick up on your very good point about the Melian Dialogue. I think it's been the hope of successive American administrations since the collapse of the Soviet Union that we were moving into a world where the rules and the norms by which civilized nations would conduct themselves would not be the rules of the Melian Dialogue, where people would not judge the

greatness of the country by its ability to inflict a lot of pain on its smaller and weaker neighbors or intimidate them into bending to its will.

The difference I think between earlier periods where people had to deal with the Soviet Union and the era we are in now, where we deal with Russia, is precisely those factors of the globalization of the international economy that my colleague adverted to in his answer. Those are stringencies that don't require the U.S. Government necessarily to do anything. Those are things that are just the inevitable workings of the international economic order.

I think it is our hope, I think, that on sober reflection, as I said in my statement, members of the Russian elite will think twice about this, precisely because this is not just about the sort of regard in which they're held in the western world. It is about things that are closer to their bottom line.

But I would not dismiss totally, as someone who spent several years serving in what was then the Soviet Union and who learned the language and has spent many visits back there, I would not underestimate the degree to which their own self-regard is to some degree tied to the regard in which they're held by the rest of the world. It's not an inconsiderable factor for them, and it's one I think that we have to—

Senator BAYH. They're not indifferent to reputational concerns.

Mr. EDELMAN. I think you may hear a lot of rhetoric right now, as you have heard and as I have heard and as Secretary Fried has heard, that they're back, that their coffers are full of energy money and they don't have to pay attention to any of this. I think over time they may have reason to have second thoughts about that.

Senator BAYH. It seems like a rather slender reed, but let's hope. So the bottom line, what I hear you saying is, while the demographics, those sorts of things, are working against them, that's something we don't have much impact over. While our leverage may not be great, we're really relying upon their appraisal of their own self-interest, which we believe they have misapprehended. Is that the bottom line there?

Mr. FRIED. We tend to think of our response on three levels. The first is to defend Georgia so that its sovereignty is not crushed, in which case Russia will have succeeded in grabbing two small provinces and nothing more.

Second, as Senator Martinez pointed out, we need to help the other countries in the region—as you pointed out, sir—the other countries in the region that feel themselves at risk.

If we succeed in those first two, then the third level, which is the long-term implications for Russia, has more weight, we have more time. Administrations love to think in terms of short time lines. That's what we have, the news cycle, the calendar to the next election. But historic shifts and strategic movement takes place in its own time. The forces of the market, the forces of international isolation, are extraordinarily powerful, but they don't happen by themselves. This isn't an invisible hand argument. This is an argument for making it clear that Russia's costs will mount over time. Some Russians, even today, are beginning to make that point cautiously, because it isn't actually a free press over there.

Senator BAYH. Thank you very much, gentlemen.

Senator WEBB. Thank you, Senator Bayh.
Senator Clinton.

Senator CLINTON. Thank you very much.

This is a tremendous opportunity for us. The questions that have been raised about our relationship with Russia going forward deserve the closest of attention and certainly an attempt to forge a bipartisan consensus similar to what we forged during the Cold War. I think that whatever allusions might have existed with the fall of the wall in Berlin have certainly been tarnished, if not eliminated, but there doesn't seem to be much that has taken their place.

I would urge that we take this opportunity, especially because we are moving to a new administration, to create a commission here in our own country—I know that President Saakashvili has called for an international commission, which I hope will be established, and I hope the United States and our NATO Allies will promote that vigorously—to create such a commission to determine the actual facts, because there is a dispute about the facts which may or may not be real, but has certainly infected the dialogue and will therefore impact whatever thinking we have going forward.

I believe that the administration would be well-served to create this U.S. commission, which then could cooperate with the international commission. In the absence of the administration moving on this, I will be introducing legislation to establish such a commission. Obviously I hope the administration does it without legislation, although I think there are members of Congress who would be worthy members of such a commission were it to be established.

I also think that as we promote the idea of the international commission it would be important to keep up a dialogue with Russia. To that end, I am somewhat troubled by the withdrawal from the nonproliferation efforts that we were engaged in. I think we ought to be able to hold competing thoughts in our mind at the same time. Is Russia more aggressive? Are they more intent upon pursuing their own interests as they define them territorially, economically, politically? Of course they are. I don't know why anybody's surprised about that. But therefore, rather than seeking to isolate them, which I think is not a smart proposal, we need to be much more strategic. I don't know that it's in our interests for the administration to withdraw the nonproliferation agreement that you had negotiated.

So I hope that we can take this opportunity to really think deeply about what deterrence in the 21st century means and what our geopolitical interests are. Senator Webb and Senator Warner raised the questions about NATO. I probably disagree with where their questions are leading, but I think it's fair game for us to debate and discuss that.

I want to turn to General Paxton and General Flynn and ask either or both of you, were you surprised by the outbreak of these hostilities in Georgia? General Paxton, General Flynn?

General FLYNN. Senator Clinton, as we said earlier, we tracked the, if you will, "peacekeeping" force that was there and the buildup of forces. You can always, I guess, reasonably expect something could happen, but in terms of the speed with which it happened and the extent that it came, as Ambassador Edelman said, it was

disproportionate to us. We knew that there was available forces north of the Roki Tunnel in Russia. We knew that there had been some summer exercises, which is not out of the norm. We knew that they have the potential to do things. But we had neither the expectation that it was going to happen to that degree and certainly to that size and speed.

Senator CLINTON. Did you also track the railroad construction and the reinforcement of infrastructure, like the depots, to facilitate the movement of heavy equipment?

General PAXTON. Yes, ma'am. To answer your first question, I, personally yes, was surprised at the disproportionality, the duration, and what I would say is sort of their tactical commitment to what they eventually achieved.

The hindsight from my perspective, because just coming into this, when we look at what preparations and the exercise that was conducted, that started on about July 15 and didn't end until about August 3, and some of the military and preparation, tactical preparation kinds of things that they did, I think when we look at it and we reexamine sort of what did we know, when did we know it, there's probably a lot more to the element of tactical surprise that we should probably be taking some lesson from.

Senator CLINTON. I appreciate your saying that General, because obviously that's within the bailiwick of this committee and I think that it would be worth some time to look at lessons learned from this.

I want to submit for the record an article that appeared in the Washington Post on July 15 by Ronald Asmus, who is with the German Marshall Fund, and it's called "A War the West Must Stop." Just the first sentence says: "There is war on the air between Georgia and Russia. Such a war could destabilize a region critical for western energy supplies and ruin relations between Russia and the west."

[The information referred to follows:]

A War The West Must Stop

By Ronald D. Asmus
Tuesday, July 15, 2008; A19

There is war in the air between Georgia and Russia. Such a war could destabilize a region critical for Western energy supplies and ruin relations between Russia and the West. A conflict over Georgia could become an issue in the U.S. presidential campaign. How they respond could become a test of the potential commander-in-chief qualities of Barack Obama and John McCain.

The issue appears to be the future of Abkhazia, a breakaway province of Georgia and the focus of a so-called frozen conflict. The real issue, however, is Moscow's desire to subjugate Tbilisi and thwart its aspirations to go west. For several years, Russian policy toward countries on its borders has been hardening. Moscow has concluded that democratic breakthroughs in places such as Georgia and Ukraine are threats that need to be squashed. It is using the "frozen conflicts" in such places as Abkhazia and South Ossetia to reestablish a sphere of influence. With a lame-duck president in Washington and Europe heading off on vacation, Moscow may sense an opportunity to "resolve" this issue once and for all.

This latest round of Russian aggression started after the West recognized Kosovo's provisional independence in February and NATO bungled the issue of offering Georgia and Ukraine a membership action plan at its Bucharest summit in April. Moscow has since launched a creeping annexation of Abkhazia, including a series of illegal moves to strengthen its military hand and to provoke Tbilisi into actions that could lead to further Russian military intervention.

Many in the West are tempted to look the other way. This crisis is, after all, inconvenient. Georgian democracy is far from perfect, and Tbilisi has certainly made its own mistakes. Russia has a new president who we all hope could be more liberal and open to the West. We also need Moscow to be aligned with the West in the United Nations on issues from Iran to North Korea to Zimbabwe. This is an awkward time to take a tough stance. It would be only too easy to equivocate, blame all parties a little and call for more diplomacy.

But this approach is making war in the Caucasus more likely, not less so.

Its warts notwithstanding, Georgia is the region's best hope for democratic development. If the Rose Revolution fails, we will wait a generation or more for another chance for positive change. Critical principles, including sovereignty and territorial integrity, are at stake. Russia is seeking to redefine the rules of post-Cold War European security to its advantage. And as Georgia is considered America's project, U.S. prestige is on the line. The Rose Revolution was animated by American values. Tbilisi has pursued American-style economic reforms, has soldiers in Iraq and wants to join NATO. The region is waiting to see whether and when Washington will step in. If we don't try to stop Russia's overstepping, countries in the region -- from Azerbaijan to Central Asian energy producers -- will recalculate accordingly.

There is one way to stop this Russian power play for Georgia: solidarity. Working with our allies in Europe, we can draw a clear line and tell Moscow that there will be real consequences in its

relations with us if it does not stop its aggressive course. Georgia, too, needs to act to de-escalate the tension. Yet Tbilisi cannot resolve this crisis alone. Halting the drift toward war requires heavy lifting by the West. In the short term, we need to prevent a conflict from starting this summer. In the medium term, we need Moscow to reverse its creeping -- and illegal -- annexation of Abkhazia. In the longer term, we need to establish an authentic peace process that can resolve the conflict for good.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice is finally engaged in this issue personally. President Bush should be, too. After all, Vladimir Putin, with whom he prides himself on having a close relationship, is the mastermind of this anti-Georgia campaign. If McCain and Obama issued statements strongly supporting Georgia, Moscow would have no illusions that its actions in the months ahead would affect U.S.-Russian relations after January, no matter which of the two senators becomes president.

Last weekend, I attended a conference at Lavadia Palace in Yalta. In the place where Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Winston Churchill acquiesced in February 1945 to Joseph Stalin's desire for a sphere of influence, I couldn't help thinking about the costs and consequences of accepting spheres of influence today. Many suspect that Crimea could be the next target if Moscow subjugates Georgia and then shifts its sights to Ukraine. Whatever the failings of these countries, they deserve better in the 21st century. They should be free to choose their own paths and to become normal democratic societies, including joining the European Union or NATO, if they so choose. That is why we should stand up for Georgia today. Accepting Moscow's demand for a sphere of influence was wrong in 1945. It would be wrong again today.

The writer is executive director of the Brussels-based Transatlantic Center and is in charge of strategic planning at the German Marshall Fund of the United States. The views expressed here are his own.

Senator CLINTON. So clearly there were observers, experts, there were people who follow this area and what's happening inside Russia and on Russia's borders who were prescient, who basically said this is a war we must stop. One of the purposes of this commission that I am advocating for our own country is, we have to answer for ourselves, did we embolden the Georgians in any way? Did we send mixed signals to the Russians? I think it's important that we understand that there is a lot of debate and ferment around what the United States Government really did say, how clear we were with Moscow, how clear we were with Georgia.

We need to sort all that out, and the military aspect of this with respect to the signals, the intelligence, the information, how it was assessed, I think is an important part of it. So clearly that should be, in my view, part of what this commission looks at.

I thank the witnesses.

Senator WEBB. Senator Nelson?

Senator BILL NELSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Since the 1990s, Georgia tried to abolish the South Ossetian autonomous region and they were trying to forcefully integrate South Ossetia into Georgia, what do the South Ossetians think? Do they think of Russia as a protector or an invader?

Mr. FRIED. It depends. The short and honest answer to that question, Senator, is it depends on which South Ossetians you talk to. Over the last couple of years the Georgians offered increasingly generous peace plans to the South Ossetians and the Abkhaz, seeking to settle this conflict diplomatically. The Georgians had offered

extensive autonomy to the Abkhaz. They had reached out to the South Ossetians as well.

There was in South Ossetia before the conflict two competing leaderships in South Ossetia. One was more for integration with Georgia with autonomy and the other was more pro-Russian.

That said, the roots of the South Ossetian-Georgian dispute do go back to the wars of the early 1990s. Plenty of mistakes, plenty of ugly things happened all around. Our effort, sir, was to promote a peaceful and diplomatic solution. As my military colleague says, as the warnings grew louder, as the tension mounted, we increased our diplomatic efforts, working with the Europeans, Germans in particular. To no avail as it turns out, we were trying to work hard to avoid this problem.

By the way, in answer to Senator Clinton's remark, Ron Asmus and I did indeed warn President Saakashvili. That was one of our warnings over the summer, that there was a moment of danger this summer. We did this in July in Dubrovnik. It was part of the record of consistent messages that we sent to the Georgians.

Senator BILL NELSON. Well, what's in the future? Is it independence? Is it Russia or is it Georgia?

Mr. FRIED. We believe in and support Georgia's territorial integrity. So do our European partners. So do all other countries in the world, with the so far exception of Nicaragua. So we support a long-term effort to reintegrate these territories into Georgia. We do not support independence. We do not support annexation by Russia.

Senator BILL NELSON. But you say that depends on who you ask then.

Mr. FRIED. In South Ossetia.

Senator BILL NELSON. Yes.

Mr. FRIED. Yes, it does.

Senator BILL NELSON. I would assume that they would have something to say about it. So that's my question: are a majority of them wanting to be in Russia, Georgia, or independent?

Mr. FRIED. I don't know of any reliable polls, but in our view Georgia's territorial integrity should not be held subject to a poll in South Ossetia under these circumstances. We have maintained support for the territorial integrity of countries as a rule and we don't believe in separatism as a rule. We need to stabilize the situation in Georgia, and what seems impossible now may not seem impossible in a long time to come.

I hope it doesn't take decades. I notice that in Cyprus, after all the bloodshed, the tension, the division of the island, there are leaders on both sides of the island who support reunification. Now they're engaged in serious talks on reunification. After 1974, for many years this would have seemed impossible, unthinkable, but there you are.

So we shouldn't dismiss what seems impossible, what seems impossible now, and we shouldn't harden that into a rule forever.

Senator BILL NELSON. I'm just trying to get the practical lay of the land, not what we want. I agree with you, that's what we want.

I first went to Cyprus and saw that division in the early 1980s and I thought it was going to be very difficult—and it seemed so

silly, the way they had drawn the lines and people came and went and so forth. It only took 30, 35 years, but it's happened.

Let me ask you this. The Russians took very great umbrage at the way we supported the independence of Kosovo. Was that a contributing factor to them going into Georgia?

Mr. FRIED. Oh, I think it was more in the nature of an excuse, and not one that stands up to any serious scrutiny. The independence of Kosovo followed nearly 10 years of U.N. administration, followed by a Security Council resolution that envisioned a final status process. It followed years of negotiations trying to come to a compromise. It was a unique situation, not at all applicable to South Ossetia and Abkhazia, and indeed you can see that by the way the Europeans have reacted. No European country has recognized South Ossetia or Abkhazia. Two-thirds of the EU, more than two-thirds now, has recognized Kosovo, as well as all the G-7 countries.

Mr. EDELMAN. Senator Nelson, if I just might add to my colleague's answer. One reason why I hope that there will be sober second thought and reflection in Russia about the direction they've gone in is that, although I don't think Kosovo is a precedent for what they've done, what they've done starts to raise questions and precedents inside Russia itself about Chechnya, about Ingushetia, about Tatarstan, Dagestan. What they have done potentially is very, very dangerous for their own self-interest again and I hope that they will reconsider it.

Senator BILL NELSON. That's a good point, particularly with regard to Chechnya.

Tell me, is the oil flowing, the gas flowing in the pipelines right now?

Mr. FRIED. I believe the Baku-Ceyhan oil pipeline gas is flowing, and that pipeline is south of the conflict zone. I'm not sure whether the oil is flowing in the Supsa pipeline, which is north, which is closer to the conflict. I also believe the gas is flowing in the Shah Deniz pipeline. Again, that runs south of the conflict area.

Senator BILL NELSON. Is that the one that goes into Turkey?

Mr. FRIED. Yes, sir.

Senator BILL NELSON. To the Mediterranean?

Mr. FRIED. The Shah Deniz pipeline and the Baku-Ceyhan oil pipeline go to Turkey, yes, sir.

Senator BILL NELSON. So you think that's flowing?

Mr. FRIED. For the moment.

Senator BILL NELSON. At the moment.

This Georgia crisis, what did it do to European energy markets?

Mr. FRIED. In the immediate term, I do not believe that there was a spike in oil or gas prices. But obviously there is a great deal of concern that Georgia's ability to act as a reliable transit country has now been, at least for the moment, put in some question. I think as the situation stabilizes, as the EU observers go in, as the Russian forces withdraw, as they must do under the ceasefire, and as Georgia recovers, these concerns may abate.

But it is certainly true that Europe is now more than ever focused on the need to diversify its energy sources and to avoid any one country having a monopoly of transit routes.

Senator BILL NELSON. I certainly hope so.

Mr. Chairman, may I ask one final quick question?

General, from a military standpoint, since Russia now says it's allowed to keep peacekeepers, what do you expect peacekeeping activities to mean?

General PAXTON. Senator, we probably have a difference in philosophy and terminology between "peacekeeping" and "monitoring," if you will, because there has to be an agreement on both sides that there is a sustainable peace that is worthy of keeping right now. So we are in the monitor mode at this point, sir. We're looking to see that all six points of the arrangement that Sarkozy looked at are being held, which first and foremost is the cessation of hostilities. Second is a return to the pre-conflict positions, and it's then at that point that you can see what type of either peacekeeping or monitoring force you may need to establish the sustainment of those conditions, sir.

Senator BILL NELSON. Do the diplomats have any different answer on that? I'm talking about what the Russians expect the peacekeeping activities to be.

Mr. FRIED. You raise a very interesting question. The six-point ceasefire accord that General Paxton referred to requires all the Russian forces to leave Georgia, and it says also that the Russian peacekeepers that can remain in South Ossetia and Abkhazia have to be limited in number to those authorized under previous agreements.

Now, today we read that the Russians are saying they're going to keep actual military forces, more or less brigade strength, in both territories. If that's true, it's inconsistent with the ceasefire. So we have to see what they think they mean.

But we have supported President Sarkozy's six-point ceasefire agreement. From what we hear of what he achieved, what he achieved in Moscow yesterday, that sounds pretty good to us. But we want to see the Russians implement all of it and all of the six-point accord without renegotiating or reinterpreting its terms.

Senator BILL NELSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN [presiding]. Thank you, Senator Nelson.

We'll have a 4-minute second round.

Secretary Fried, you've earlier this morning said there's been no promise of NATO membership to Georgia. It seems to me that that is inconsistent with the Bucharest Summit statement, which is that "We the NATO members agreed today that these countries will become members of NATO." It also seems to be inconsistent with the statement of Vice President Cheney in Georgia, where he said: "Georgia will be in our alliance." Those sound like promises to me, but yet you say they have not been promised NATO membership.

My question to you is, how do you reconcile your statements here with the statements of Vice President Cheney and the Bucharest Summit?

Mr. FRIED. I'm familiar, of course, with both statements. In my remarks I said that there has been no invitation extended to these countries and that's the context under which I meant a promise. There's been no invitation to these countries. There has been, both at the Bucharest Summit and a statement the Vice President reflected in his trip, that yes, some day Georgia and Ukraine will be

members of the alliance. Before we get to the point of NATO actually extending an invitation to these countries, these countries have a lot of work to do. That's recognized by everyone. They have—the things they have to do are things only they can do.

But what the NATO leaders agreed in Bucharest and what the Vice President was reflecting is a statement that these countries are on a track to membership if they make the reforms that they need to make and that they have not been consigned to a Russian sphere of influence or a grey zone. So that's how I would reconcile them. A perfectly fair question, Senator.

Chairman LEVIN. The ifs were not in the statements that were made at the Bucharest Summit, I believe. They may have been, but they surely were not in the Vice President's statement. There were no ifs, ands, and buts. It wasn't that if they comply with the NATO conditions, it was they will become members of NATO.

You're being much more cautious as to what you now are saying that NATO meant in the Bucharest Summit; if they comply with NATO's conditions, that then some day they will be invited to become a member of NATO. That's much more cautious than the Vice President was. So while you've made an effort to reconcile them, I don't think you fully succeeded in doing so, which is no fault of your own.

Mr. FRIED. I honestly don't see the difference. I understood the NATO—I was at Bucharest and I'm familiar with the leaders' statement, and it was a strong statement. It was the right statement to make, and that means that we are recognizing that these countries have a right to join the alliance, that they are on a membership track, that we have not recognized a Russian sphere of influence. That's how I see that statement and I believe that all recognize that both of these countries have much work to do, including them. They recognize it.

Since Senator Warner is back, I would like to say that the questions he raised and that Senator Webb raised are perfectly valid questions and we have to think of them seriously, but it is important and remains important that we signal to these countries that their future with the alliance is a function of their own progress in making reforms and our own decisions, not a function of somebody else's veto.

Mr. EDELMAN. Mr. Chairman, if I might just—

Chairman LEVIN. It sounds like these are not, however, in your mouth unconditional commitments to membership. They are conditioned upon these countries meeting the membership requirements of NATO and they're conditioned upon a decision of NATO to then invite these countries to become members. Is that fair?

Mr. FRIED. It is very fair to say that NATO has not invited these countries to membership, to join the alliance. It is also fair to say that the Bucharest decision was not a NATO invitation and all the leaders understood that. It was a very strong and proper statement that these countries have the right and that their path to NATO membership will not be encumbered or blocked by an outside power. So yes, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. I just want to be very clear on the one part you leave out when you repeat what I said, that membership invita-

tions are also conditioned upon those countries meeting the membership requirements of NATO.

Mr. FRIED. Yes, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. Okay.

Mr. FRIED. Without qualification.

Chairman LEVIN. Fair enough.

Mr. EDELMAN. Mr. Chairman, if I might rise to my colleague's assistance for just 1 second, not that he needs much from me. But I think it's fair to say that both the Bucharest statement and the Vice President's statement were statements of the alliance's intent to have these countries join. But all the members who have come in since the first round in 1997 at the Madrid Summit have had to go through a series of hoops to get there. In any event, even the heads, as powerful as they are, ultimately are not the dispositive voice because all of these countries, once an invitation has been accepted, have to go through the process of having their adherence to the treaty ratified by all of the parliaments, and indeed this body.

Chairman LEVIN. It sounds like something less than unconditional promises to me. We'll let others make that judgment. The promise of the Vice President sounds unconditional: You will become a member of NATO. That is an unconditional commitment. What you're saying here is that the path that they're on is conditioned on a number of things occurring, and that strikes me as being very different.

But I'm going to leave it at that because I want to ask you about the Patriot deployment to Poland, and I think this probably goes to you, Secretary Edelman, and maybe to General Paxton as well.

Senator WARNER. Let me ask one question.

Chairman LEVIN. That's fine.

Senator WARNER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Earlier I asked about whether any U.S. forces had been put on alert and I think we have in the record a very clear response. But I'd like to have the parallel question; were there any requests from the president of Georgia or other high-ranking officials for the U.S. to provide active military support for the Georgian military? [Pause.]

Mr. EDELMAN. I was just taking counsel with my colleague because there were a variety of different conversations that went on. But I'm not aware of any requests. The chairman had a conversation with his Georgian counterpart. Secretary Gates had conversations with his Georgian counterpart and with President Saakashvili. I'm not aware of any requests for U.S. forces. There was a request for the U.S. to use its influence with Russia to get them to stop what they were doing.

Senator WARNER. That's understood.

Secretary Fried?

Mr. FRIED. Same. I'm not aware of any.

Senator WARNER. General?

General PAXTON. Mr. Senator, the only specific request that we received on the military side—there was already a caveat in the deployment of the Georgian brigade in support of multinational force that was preexisting. It was in the event that they needed them for the defense of the homeland would we assist them—

Senator WARNER. That's understood.

General PAXTON. We had that one, sir.

Senator WARNER. General Flynn?

General FLYNN. No, sir. Just as my colleagues have stated.

Senator WARNER. I think one of the great values of this hearing—and I commend our chairman for first holding the hearing and then pressing on the issue of the conditions which Georgia might face if and when NATO considers their admission as members. Is a part of that process dwelling on the issue with a new member, are you going to assert caveats for the use of your forces to NATO? Is that part of the process? Because we have to come—I say “we”; NATO has to come to grips with this issue of caveats. It's just totally unfair in my judgment for the American GI, the British tommy, the other soldiers of Denmark, Canada, and several others who are out there doing the heavy lifting and fighting and taking the risks in Afghanistan, then to be asked, if they were required under Article 5 to engage on the European continent in some sort of conflict, to be confronted once again with this issue of caveats.

So is it part of the process to determine—I tell you what. I'd prefer you answer that for the record.

[The information referred to follows:]

There are no specific questions that an aspirant must answer related to caveats when seeking North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) membership. However, as most NATO aspirants are troop contributing nations prior to joining NATO, we do receive a sense of what degree of caveat, if any, they will place on their forces. That said, caveats are not usually general policies, but reflect a government's political sensitivities or different perceptions of a specific operational mission. For instance, caveats that a nation defines for operations in International Security Assistance Force may not be the same as those for another operation. When nations seek parliamentary approval to deploy forces, the level of political support for the proposed operation is often reflected in the caveats placed on its forces. The Alliance may have to accept a nation's caveat as the “price” for gaining political support for a particular operation.

Mr. EDELMAN. We'll get you a fuller answer for the record, Senator Warner.

First of all, I agree completely with your concerns about caveats. Secretary Gates shares them. I think all of us do.

Senator WARNER. But we have to do something about them.

Mr. EDELMAN. Right.

Senator WARNER. I think we're fighting in Afghanistan as we're sitting here.

Mr. EDELMAN. Right.

Senator WARNER. Asking of these men and women of the armed forces to take these risks.

Mr. EDELMAN. I think it's a point well taken. I think no one can enter the alliance with a caveat about enforcing Article 5. That I think is very clear, and I'm not aware of any nation that's adhered to the alliance that has done that.

The issue brings itself forward when we deal with things like Stabilization Force and Kosovo Force and International Security Assistance Force. That's where we have the problem.

Mr. FRIED. I'd also like to mention, sir, that many of the newer NATO Allies have contributed combat forces in Iraq and Afghanistan without caveats and have done a lot of hard fighting. The Poles, when we asked, put in a combat battalion, combat helicopters—

Senator WARNER. You're correct.

Mr. FRIED.—to go to the east, where it's hot. So they have pulled—a lot of the allies have pulled their weight.

Senator WARNER. Denmark should be added to that group.

Mr. FRIED. Denmark, Canada, The Netherlands in the south. A lot of very tough fighting. The Rumanians, Estonians. So Allies before and after 1989 have come in to do the hard stuff.

Senator WARNER. But as the chairman in his questioning said, there's been a lot of bravado and statements made in support of Georgia, but to the average citizen that translates into the potential use of U.S. forces to carry out that bravado—we don't want to end up like a paper tiger, talking about how strongly we're going to support them, but when it comes down to a combat situation, understandably, we'd have to say differently.

We have to be extremely cautious in these situations, because they're going to come up from time to time. Russia is, as we say, feeling its oats right now and we don't know where the next issue may come up. But let us learn from this one how to be very careful in our comments with regard to the support we're going to give that nation that may be afflicted by another one of these problems.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Your answer to the question whether if Georgia were a member of NATO we would have been obligated to come to their defense was unambiguous. The answer was yes. Is that answer unambiguous and unconditional, put aside Georgia for a moment. But if a country that is in NATO initiates a military action against a non-NATO neighbor, against the advice of all of the NATO members, and then that neighbor attacks the NATO member with disproportionate force, is NATO obligated under Article 5 to come to the defense of the NATO member that initiated the ground activity against the advice of NATO?

Mr. FRIED. Article 5—

Chairman LEVIN. Could you give me a yes or no on that, or a maybe, and then explain your answer?

Mr. FRIED. Article 5—

Chairman LEVIN. I think your answer to that last question is no, that you can't give me a yes, no, or maybe. Is that right?

Mr. FRIED. Mr. Chairman, you've offered a hypothetical and it's always difficult and usually dangerous to try to answer hypotheticals.

Chairman LEVIN. So the answer is maybe.

Mr. FRIED. Article 5 has to mean what it says, which is that essentially an attack on one is an attack on all.

Chairman LEVIN. It says more than that, doesn't it?

Mr. FRIED. If a nation is attacked—

Chairman LEVIN. It has to be acting in their defense, self-defense. My question was if they initiate a ground attack against a non-NATO neighbor and that neighbor responds with disproportionate force, does that automatically trigger Article 5? That's my question. Where NATO had given advice, don't attack that non-NATO neighbor, just to make it harder for you.

Mr. FRIED. Oh, it's hard enough.

As I said, hypotheticals are difficult and dangerous. The question you ask is a serious one and NATO is not an aggressive alliance.

Article 5 is not intended to support aggression. There has not been a case of a NATO member committing aggression against its neighbors. One of the criteria for NATO membership is that countries have good relations with their neighbors. That's one of the things we've looked at since the NATO enlargement process began in the early 1990s.

So that's by way of answering what I think may be a tough question, but it's not an unfair one. It's a relevant one. So we don't look at Article 5 as some kind of license for irresponsible behavior, and so far in the history of NATO there have not been these sorts of cases.

Chairman LEVIN. In your judgment, was Georgia's action against our advice irresponsible?

Mr. FRIED. I think there will be time once we have more detailed information of what exactly happened on August 7 to make that judgment. They certainly took this action against our advice, that's true. They believed at the time, at least they said at the time, that they thought the Russian forces were coming through the Roki Tunnel and they were in imminent danger. I'm unable to tell you now whether or not this was true, but I know that it was true that they said so, because they said so to me.

Senator WARNER. Thank you.

This question, as I mentioned, is for either Secretary Edelman or General Paxton. It relates to the Patriot battery that is going to be deployed in Poland. My question is, is this going to be a fully operationally effective Patriot battery?

Mr. EDELMAN. I can start and then General Paxton may want to fill in some of the technical detail, Mr. Chairman. I think our undertaking is to provide a rotational presence with a battalion, a battalion-plus really—it's an engagement package, I think. We will have a presence for each quarter for some period of time while we engage in some training activities. I think the Poles have indicated they may in the future want to make purchases of their own Patriots, and I think that's what our intent is.

But I don't think, at least in the initial stages, it will be a fully operational capability 24/7.

Chairman LEVIN. So it's intended, at least at this stage, that this be a rotational training capability, is that correct?

General PAXTON. That's basically correct, Mr. Senator.

Chairman LEVIN. The Poles understand that, that this is not going to be a fully operationally effective battery? Do they understand that?

Mr. EDELMAN. Initially, and I think that our hope is that ultimately, as I said, with a combination of training and purchases, they will have a full capability at some point in the future.

Chairman LEVIN. All right.

Is NATO scheduled to take up applications of Ukraine and Georgia in December for a MAP? If so, has that plan been filed, those plans been filed by those two countries?

Mr. FRIED. Yes, sir. A MAP is on the agenda for NATO to consider at the December foreign ministerial.

Chairman LEVIN. So has a MAP been filed that you know of?

Mr. FRIED. Well, these—

Chairman LEVIN. Are they prepared, and if so by whom?

Mr. FRIED. These countries have asked for it, and the MAP is essentially a work program that develops over time of what these countries have to do to qualify to meet NATO standards.

Chairman LEVIN. So there's no draft plan for either country that is at NATO?

Mr. FRIED. I don't believe so. But these plans are developed between the country and NATO staff, and in our experience they're very rigorous. They go on for some time and they have been successful in the past.

Chairman LEVIN. As of this time, you don't know whether or not these plans have been completed for consideration by NATO?

Mr. FRIED. I don't know what NATO's decision will be in December.

Chairman LEVIN. No, not decision. Whether the plan that they're going to look at has been drafted.

Mr. FRIED. You mean the work program?

Chairman LEVIN. Whatever the plan is.

Mr. FRIED. I don't know whether it has been completed. We have experience with this in the past with respect to Albania, Croatia.

Mr. EDELMAN. Mr. Chairman, my ever-alert staff has pointed out to me that I misspoke when I answered your earlier question. It's a battery plus, not a battalion plus. I stand corrected.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

What we're going to do now is move to what I think will be a brief executive session. We thank our witnesses for their being here, for their information, and we will stand adjourned.

[Questions for the record with answers supplied follow:]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR CARL LEVIN

STATUS OF HEALTH CARE SERVICES IN GEORGIA

1. Senator LEVIN. Mr. Fried, I have heard reports that 17 United States Agency for International Development health clinics, ambulatory facilities, or dispensaries were either damaged or destroyed during the conflict in Georgia. Some facilities were burned or looted. With a reported 70,000 refugees countrywide, do we know what kind of impact the conflict has had on health services for these individuals?

Mr. FRIED. There are 17 primary health clinics in the "Gori to Tshkinvali" corridor; however, none of them have been funded by USAID. Many of those clinics were renovated in recent years by the World Bank. The Georgian Minister of Health, Alexander Kvitashvili, confirmed that one of these clinics was burned, five were looted, three were damaged by fighting, and the remaining eight clinics were untouched. Residents in areas covered by the nine nonfunctional primary health clinics are receiving medical care from mobile clinics operated by the International Committee of the Red Cross.

On August 20, an interagency team completed an assessment of medical conditions in Gori which reported no major health or nutritional problems. The water supply was reportedly safe and the conflict had not severely damaged the health care system. Following the provision of some medical supplies soon after the conflict began, the Georgian Ministry of Labor, Health, and Social Affairs stated no additional medical supplies were necessary to address immediate needs.

Georgian health authorities have confirmed that all internally displaced persons (IDP) centers continue to have dedicated primary care providers who can identify, treat, and refer patients to primary care facilities or hospitals. IDPs are receiving health services free of charge in government health facilities or through programs operated by nongovernmental organizations.

2. Senator LEVIN. Mr. Fried, how many individuals were displaced by the invasion?

Mr. FRIED. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates that 192,000 individuals fled their homes due to the violence; 127,000 displaced from South Ossetia and Abkhazia into other parts of Georgia; 30,000 within

the separatist region South Ossetia; and an additional 35,000 to Russia. Recent UNHCR estimates indicate that significant numbers of displaced Georgians have returned to their homes; however, 54,000 individuals will likely not be able to return to their homes in the near future.

3. Senator LEVIN. Mr. Fried, how many people were affected by the destruction of the health clinics?

Mr. FRIED. Neither the Georgian Government nor international organizations know exactly how many people were affected by the destruction of health facilities. We can safely assume, however, that all people living in Kurta, Tskhinvali, and Gori, where Russian military action damaged or destroyed major facilities, were significantly affected for varying periods of time. Before the conflict began, the total population of these three cities was approximately 96,000. (Gori - 49,000, Tskhinvali - 42,000, Kurta - 5,000)

4. Senator LEVIN. Mr. Fried, how many hospitals were damaged or destroyed?

Mr. FRIED. The Georgian Minister of Health reported to the U.N. Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs that the hospitals in Kurta, South Ossetia, and Tkviavi near Gori were completely destroyed. The World Health Organization reports that the hospital in Tskhinvali, as well as 49 health stations, which comprise approximately 60 percent of the health network in South Ossetia, suffered damages. This hospital is currently nonfunctional, although it is unclear whether this is due to physical damage to the hospital, or because the hospital staff have fled the region.

5. Senator LEVIN. Mr. Fried, have refugees lost access to primary care as a result of the destroyed or damaged facilities?

Mr. FRIED. Georgian health authorities have confirmed that all IDP centers continue to have dedicated primary care providers who can identify, treat, and refer patients to primary or hospital level services. IDPs are receiving health services free of charge in government health facilities or through programs operated by non-governmental organizations.

6. Senator LEVIN. Mr. Fried, how many emergency facilities were damaged or destroyed?

Mr. FRIED. The two emergency facilities in Tskhinvali and Kurta—the main hospitals in each of these cities—were completely destroyed. The main hospital in Gori, which also contains an emergency facility, was partially damaged and was closed for two days.

7. Senator LEVIN. Mr. Fried, how many people were affected by this loss of services?

Mr. FRIED. Neither the Georgian Government nor international organizations know exactly how many people were affected by the destruction of the emergency facilities. All the people living in Kurta and Tskhinvali, where major facilities were severely damaged or destroyed, were significantly affected for varying periods of time. Prior to the conflict, the total population of these two cities was approximately 47,000. (Tskhinvali - 42,000, Kurta - 5,000)

8. Senator LEVIN. Mr. Fried, how will the U.S. influx of humanitarian aid be used to provide health services on the ground, particularly in the Gori area?

Mr. FRIED. The Government of Georgia, in collaboration with U.S. Government-funded international organizations and nongovernmental organization partners, drafted a strategy that was incorporated in the U.N. Country Team's Emergency Flash Appeal for Georgia. The top priorities include: assessing damage to health infrastructure; monitoring health threats; supporting the Georgian Ministry of Health in its efforts to coordinate responses to the conflict-affected population; providing medical assistance in areas that lost access to the health care system; supporting the reestablishment of essential and emergency medical, public health, and environmental health services; and addressing gaps in the delivery of humanitarian supplies.

The initial U.S. response to the crisis included distributions of medical supplies, equipment, and medicines to multiple health facilities around Georgia, including in Gori and other towns near the conflict zone. Many people fled initially to Tbilisi and other non-occupied areas, but have now returned to their home areas, although a significant number, especially those from South Ossetia, will not be able to do so in the immediate future. We continue to work closely with the Government of Georgia to assess current health care needs.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR MARK PRYOR

CYBER WARFARE

9. Senator PRYOR. Mr. Edelman and Mr. Fried, Georgian authorities have claimed that on the day before Russia's military offensive into Georgia, entities inside Russia launched a cyber distributed denial of service attack against Georgian government Web sites, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and effectively interrupted critical communications operations.

The Air Force's Chief of Staff and Secretary have recently implemented a delay in the Initial Operational Capability of Air Force Cyber Command (AFCYBER), as well as the basing and organizational arrangement decisions for AFCYBER Headquarters, in an attempt to provide additional time to consider emerging issues and opportunities to consider outside authorities commenting on related organizations. What lessons have been learned from the Georgia-Russia conflict regarding cyber operations and how can we apply this information to our broader national security objectives regarding this new threat?

Mr. EDELMAN. The cyber assault on Georgian Government and media Web sites was coincident with the Russian Federation attack into South Ossetia on 8 August 2008. Attacks included blocking of Internet traffic to and from Georgia, distributed denial of service attacks, and defacement of government and media Web sites. Unlike the 2007 cyber offensive against Estonia, which targeted and crippled the entire Estonian national infrastructure, the attacks against Georgia targeted government information outlets (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Defense, and the President's Web site), as well as Georgian media organizations.

The attacks against Georgia highlight the difficulty of attribution in cyberspace. The U.S. Government has not assigned responsibility for the attacks. The source could be the Government of Russia, Russian criminal elements, hacktivists, or any other entity or group; definitive attribution may never be known. Regardless of who instigated the attacks, the cyber activity added to the concerns and burdens of the Government of Georgia while it was engaged in countering a ground assault into its territory.

Despite the source or effects of the attacks, the lesson for the United States and for the Department of Defense (DOD) in particular is that we must plan and prepare for a cyber component in all future conflicts, both military and political. DOD must be prepared to defend against, mitigate the effects of, and operate through cyber attacks by implementing robust information assurance programs and strong network resiliency. We must have the ability to survive and reconstitute during and after cyber attacks. DOD continues to monitor new cyber threats and vulnerabilities to our networks in order to develop and implement appropriate countermeasures and network security solutions.

We can assume that adversaries will target critical infrastructure and information systems, particularly vulnerabilities that exist in the private sector or in the non-military public sector. The Comprehensive National Cybersecurity Initiative (CNCI), led by the Department of Homeland Security, anticipates many issues highlighted in the Georgian and Estonian cyber experiences. Implementation of the CNCI across the Federal enterprise will enhance our National cybersecurity posture. DOD is a full partner in this effort.

Mr. FRIED. The denial of service attacks in Georgia and defacement of Georgian government Web sites prior to overt military hostilities with Russia highlight a trend in which cyber attacks accompany high-profile international disputes or conflicts. Goals seem to vary, with punishment the motive in the case of Estonia and disruption of government-citizen communications the objective in Georgia. The United States has assigned no responsibility to any entity for the attacks on Georgia and we recognize the underlying difficulty of attributing identity to attackers in cyberspace. One key response is to help defend networks.

In response to the attacks in Georgia, three countries—Poland, Estonia, and Canada—sent Computer Emergency Response Teams (CERTs) to assist the Georgian authorities in assessing damage and making recommendations to prevent future attacks. NATO sent a cyber expert to offer assistance, and in addition, NATO activated cyber security mechanisms it developed in response to standards set forth by Allied leaders at NATO's Summit in Riga in November 2006. The damage was minimal, and Georgia anticipates no long-term effects of this attack.

The United States is keenly aware of the increasing threat, and under the President's Comprehensive National Cybersecurity Initiative (CNCI) we are taking systematic steps to significantly enhance our defensive posture. With Congress's support, we are working with diligence to implement the CNCI throughout the Federal Government.

Moreover, we are working in a variety of ways to organize and strengthen the capabilities of our friends and allies to defend against, mediate, and reconstitute following such cyber events. The new NATO Cyber Defense Policy, which the United States championed after the May 2007 attacks on Estonia, put in place those policies and processes that enabled NATO to come to Georgia's immediate assistance. Similarly, we are working with our closest partners and allies to develop complementary strategies to deal with cyber threats worldwide.

GEORGIA TRAIN AND EQUIP

10. Senator PRYOR. Mr. Edelman and Mr. Fried, on April 29, 2002, DOD announced the beginning of the Georgia Train and Equip Program (GTEP). This program implemented President Bush's decision to respond to the Government of Georgia's request for assistance to enhance its counterterrorism capabilities. This effort complemented other counterterrorism efforts around the globe and increased stability in the Caucasus. The 20-month, \$64 million plan involved a maximum of 150 U.S. soldiers, and was expected to be duplicated in 20 other countries. The program's goal was to build strong and effective staff organizations capable of creating and sustaining standardized operating procedures, training plans, operational plans, and a property accounting system. Tactical training was provided sequentially and consisted of approximately 100 days per unit. The goal of the tactical program is to instruct Georgian battalions in light infantry tactics, to include platoon-level offensive and defensive operations and basic air mobile tactics. How were the skills and equipment that the Georgian military acquired through GTEP useful for fighting against the Russians?

Mr. EDELMAN. Skills and equipment acquired from the GTEP was of little utility, nor was it intended to be. The program, and its successor, were for counterinsurgency and counterterrorism operations, not force on force. GTEP and its successor was useful for its intended purpose, as the program supported Georgian soldiers, eventually numbering up to 2,000, deploying alongside U.S. forces in global war on terror operations.

GTEP (April 2002–December 2003) was designed to give Georgia a light infantry counterinsurgency/counterterrorism capability to re-establish its sovereignty over its territory. The program was initiated after Russian requests for Georgia to secure lawless elements in the Pankisi Gorge. The program trained basic light infantry soldier skills such as small arms marksmanship, land navigation, first aid, and squad level offensive and defensive tactics. From this foundation, it built up to platoon level skills and finished with company level offensive and defensive operations. The unit trained in GTEP (1st Brigade) was deployed to Iraq until August 11, 2008.

GTEP did not provide combined arms operations training. It was specifically designed not to enable or encourage the Georgians to use force to resolve the separatist conflicts. The equipment provided was basic arms, equipment, and clothing to operate as light-infantry battalions. Based on our understanding of events, skills gained during GTEP training did not benefit the Georgians in any meaningful way in their fight against the Russians. As for equipment, U.S. supplied body armor and Kevlar helmets likely limited Georgian casualties. The U.S. provided Harris radios were not used to their potential as the Georgians command structure opted to use cell phones for command and control.

Mr. FRIED. The GTEP trained and equipped light infantry battalions of the Georgian 1st Brigade in basic combat skills up to the company level from April 2002 to December 2003. GTEP was designed to provide Georgia a light infantry counterinsurgency/counterterrorism capability to re-establish central government control over lawless regions of the country; it did not give Georgia the capability to resolve its separatist conflicts by military means, nor to withstand a Russian invasion.

The program was initiated after Russian demands for Georgia to secure the Pankisi Gorge, where Chechen fighters had taken advantage of weak central-government control to establish a presence. The United States European Command provided training and equipment to prepare the Georgian Armed Forces to conduct counterterrorism operations and provide peacekeeping forces that could serve alongside U.S. and/or NATO forces. The program trained basic light infantry soldier skills such as small arms marksmanship, land navigation, first aid, and squad level offensive and defensive tactics. GTEP did not provide combined-arms operations training. It was specifically designed not to enable or encourage the Georgians to use force to resolve the separatist conflicts. The equipment provided was basic arms, equipment, and clothing to operate as light-infantry battalions. As for equipment, U.S.-supplied body armor and Kevlar helmets likely limited Georgian casualties. The

training provided matched the required practical tactics, techniques, and procedures to conduct basic infantry tasks.

This program created basic-trained infantry soldiers that could perform basic light-infantry tactics up to the company level. The unit trained in GTEP (1st Brigade) was deployed to Iraq until August 11 and was not involved in combat operations during the August war with Russia.

[Whereupon, at 12 p.m., the committee adjourned.]

